

# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Wilson Collison on "This Writing Business"..... <i>By Anzonetta Collison</i>	7
Harold Bell Wright Says Selection Puts Genius to the Test..... ..... <i>By Effie Leese Scott</i>	10
"Snowballing" a Plot..... <i>By Willard E. Hawkins</i>	13
Artistry in Punctuation..... <i>By Lloyd E. Smith</i>	17
Literary Market Tips.....	20
The S. T. C. News.....	24
Queries and Comments.....	28
Prize Contests.....	32
Brevities.....	34
Tabloid Reviews.....	34

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WHAT MAGAZINE will be the first to inaugurate a policy of sending manuscripts to the authors when there is cutting to be done on them? Some flagrant examples of "chopping" which have come to our attention recently are responsible for the suggestion. The work is done so crudely, in many cases, that we cannot believe the editors are guilty. More than likely, when a story is found to be a few lines too long, it is the makeup man in the composing room who cuts out enough words or sentences to get the conclusion into the desired space. The result, nine times out of ten, is that the effectiveness of the author's conclusion is marred—frequently it is rendered unintelligible. The reader doesn't know how it happened—he merely decides that the story is a "flop" and that the author doesn't know how to express himself.

Presumably, also, it is the compositor or the proofreader, rather than the editor, who gets the

author "in bad" with readers by such changes, for example, as spelling the "dogies" of Western fiction so that it reads "doggies." Back to the editor, or editorial assistant, however, must go the responsibility for causing a Western character to expectorate in "the waste basket," when the author employed a vessel somewhat more consistent with the furnishings of a frontier saloon. Or for causing a Western bad man to ejaculate "My word!" when the author had put old-fashioned profanity into his mouth!

HEARINGS IN CONGRESS on the Upshaw censorship measure, H. R. 6233, were commenced in April. The bill provides for a body of commissioners to be maintained at fat salaries to review scenarios, working scripts and films and dictate what films and scenes may be manufactured. No picture can be made which, in the opinion of the censors, might

impair health, debase or corrupt public morals, produce depraved moral standards, cause moral laxity, disturb public peace or impair friendly relations with any foreign power, hold up to scorn any race, nation, sect or religion.

The measure is iniquitous—not because its objects are unworthy, but because it would put unwarranted power into the hands of a few political appointees—without the slightest probability that those few will be qualified to exercise this power with the superhuman discretion that alone would make its exercise desirable. Further, it opens the way to the creation of similar commissions to sit upon arts and letters and dictate to writers and artists what they may create, or to publishers what they may print. Witness the various "clean book" bills that are now up before various state legislatures.

That pictures are sometimes produced that have objectionable features, and that material is published which may violate morals or good taste—must be acknowledged. But censorship is not the remedy for this. No matter how excellent censorship may be in theory, it has been proved a failure by the almost incredible stupidity with which it has been put into practice.

This may be an expression of personal opinion—but if so, it illustrates the point. The censor is simply one person (or a group of persons) empowered to impose personal opinions and prejudices on the public. To some, the human form is a divine expression of beauty; to others it is something inherently base and suggestive. The amusing tempest raised over the publication of "Hatrack" last month reveals the extent to which censorship might be carried. A pathetic character sketch, an indictment of hypocrisy—because it treads on the toes of some persons and deals with a present-day problem frankly, instead of suggestively—is set upon by would-be censors. The net result in this case was that everybody who could buy, beg, borrow, or steal a copy of *The American Mercury* read it—which may be a good thing, because it introduced them to a magazine which is designed to make readers think instead of to lull them asleep; but if censorship had been in full power, the result would have been otherwise.

The problem of guarding children from books and plays which are beyond their years is one that must be handled by the parents and schools. Certainly it cannot be handled by the suppression of everything that deals with phases of life and problems which children are not ready to understand—unless we intend to develop into a child-minded race. Censorship insults the intelligence of the average or superior-minded adult. To what advantage the development of such minds as have flowered in Sherwood Anderson, Wilbur Daniel Steele, James Branch Cabell, George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, if political appointees of but ordinary intellect are to sit in judgment upon them and tell them what they may publish? The literary judgment of the individual may be imperfect, but, imperfect or otherwise, a thinking man re-

fuses to acknowledge the right or ability of anyone else to tell him what he shall see or read.

This cannot be construed as an argument for license. Public sentiment will prevent in future, as it has in the past, the extensive publication or production of anything that is definitely indecent or subversive of public morals. The police and the courts can be invoked where individuals defy the laws. There at least, when there are conflicting opinions as to what constitutes immorality or treason, both sides are given a hearing.

The discretion of producers and publishers is the best protection of the public, however. Producers, catering to a wide and varied audience, do not find it profitable to manufacture pictures which go to extremes in violating morals or good taste. The hullabaloo that is raised when a producer oversteps the line even to a degree is the best deterrent—even if it does not result, as the extremists would have it, in toning all pictures down to the level of six-year-old minds. Publishers—especially of magazines—aspiring to wide circulation, are restrained from issuing anything "unpleasant" by the ever-present fear of offending some of their readers. Magazines and books issued for a less conventional-minded class find their limited public and give it the mental food and stimulus they desire. Must we deny a large group of presumably intelligent persons the reading that appeals to them, simply because others do not approve of their taste? The bigot would reply, "Yes. Our judgment of what is good for persons to read is the only correct judgment." And so further crimes are committed in the name of Godliness.

While *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST* discusses these subjects but rarely, it is well to remind writers occasionally that their rights and interests are definitely at stake in fanatical legislation which may seek to tell them what they shall not read or write.

ANOTHER OF THE "SONG SHARKS," which apparently do a thriving business among the credulous, was closed up the latter part of March when the post office department issued a fraud order against the Equitable Music Corporation of New York, charging it with fraudulent use of the mails in seeking out aspirants to fame in the song-writing field. The company was operated by Harold B. Kohler and J. Victor Green, with Walter W. Newcomer as "musical arranger." The plan was for a consideration to furnish musical settings and publish the work of amateur lyric writers. The fraud order states: "The evidence shows that this is a scheme for obtaining money through the mails by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations and promises." The company is stated to have taken \$700,000 from its victims.

AN UNUSUALLY ENTERTAINING attempt to impose on amateur writers seems to have gone forth during the past month in the form of vast quantities of literature from "The National Publishers," of 5428 S. Wells Street, Chicago. The *piece de re-*

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istance is a circular entitled "The Private Market," in which are listed various magazines that are clamoring for manuscripts through the concern. For \$5 the names and addresses of the markets listed in this and later bulletins will be furnished, and furthermore, whoever or whatever you may be, the publishers state, "we guarantee that one of your manuscripts will be accepted by check or special contract before your subscription has expired." Although it is unlikely that any reader of THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST could be so unsophisticated as to give the enterprise a passing thought, a few choice phrases from the bulletin are reproduced for the joy of it:

As soon as one manuscript has been accepted our services on this part is ended, although of course you still receive this magazine and \$25,000.00 offer every month.

This Review is received by 5,000 editors all over the country every issue. When your write-up attracts the attention of either editors or studio directors you will receive a proposition for acceptance of your manuscript direct from them. Story writers, scenario writers, poets, song writers and special articles purchased from every issue.

No. 21. For those who have not had a novel published in book form, this offer is open too only.

No. 33. The ideas are what we want, and the ability to put it into correct form is not absolutely necessary.

No. 41. A great demand for our publication right now is true humorous stories. In almost every person's life he has a humorous story that will bring him or her a good-sized check.

No. 52. A magazine that uses only short stories and poems are in need of good poems at the present time. Less than forty lines is wanted.

No. 54. Stories that deal with boys from four to five thousands words in length are wanted.

No. 70. Amateur writers is whom we purchase most of our material from, and we welcome them.

WILLARD KING BRADLEY'S "To a Departed Author" (a tribute to O. Henry) is, so far as we know, the first poem to be printed on more than one occasion on the Current Poetry page of *The Literary Digest*. It originally appeared in the October, 1925, issue of THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST and was then reprinted in *The Literary Digest* for November 21, 1925. In the April 3, 1926, issue of that famous weekly, it again appeared. Several other papers have reprinted it.

NOT ONLY YOUNG WRITERS but seasoned professionals are always interested in the personalities of other writers who have achieved any degree of fame or success. Anzonetta Collison, wife of Wilson Collison, who contributes an interview with her husband to this issue, writes: "The subject of this brief interview would be quite indignant if I were to suggest that he is famous. And frankly, I do not believe that he is by any means famous, nor does he. But his name is pretty well known to a goodly number of magazine readers and playgoers in the United States, and to some few abroad. Wilson Collison is a slender young man of thirty-four, just five feet and six inches in height. He is nearly always conspicuous in a crowd for his 'soundlessness.' He talks little, never argues, seldom discusses shop, and is always smoking a cigarette. In the short space of his thirty-four years he has been

a drug clerk, a truck driver, an advertising writer, an actor and an author. He is the author of several well-known stage successes, including "Up In Mabel's Room," "The Girl In the Limousine," "Desert Sands" and a half dozen more. He has written many short-stories for almost every popular magazine in America. He has never written a novel, crept into *The Saturday Evening Post* nor composed a song."

We disagree with Mr. Collison on but one point in the interview. Writers, in our opinion, read too much of present-day literature, not enough of the masters. They would gain depth and richness of style and thought by substituting, for the fodder of today, as a mental diet the great works which have stood the test of time.

LOYD E. SMITH, who contributes "Artistry in Punctuation" to this issue, is the author of a large number of the widely known 'Little Blue Books' issued by the Haldiman-Julius Company, of Girard, Kans. (a few of them are: "Punctuation Self-Taught," "Grammar Self-Taught," "Common Faults in Writing English," "How to Improve Your Vocabulary," "Dictionary of Classical Mythology," etc.), and has recently become associate editor of the *Haldiman-Julius Monthly*. He is a contributor to *The Mentor*, *American Speech*, and other magazines, and is retained as an assistant in the English department of Trinity College, Hartford, Conn., acting as theme-reader. An elementary treatise on the rules of punctuation would be out of place in THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST. Mr. Smith's article deals with subtleties of punctuation that can be made to serve the writer in securing delicate shades of meaning.

APROPPOS OF PUNCTUATION, one of the linotype operators who sets type for THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST, recalls an incident which occurred several years ago while he was in the composing room of the *Chicago Tribune*. A new operator received back the proof of a galley he had composed, with commas marked in all down its length. He took the proof to the foreman, demanding, "What is the rule in this office about commas?" The foreman gave him a look of withering scorn. "Three to a line," he responded tersely.

ONE OF OUR VALUED CONTRIBUTORS has a habit of sending us items, suggestions, and market notes written on odds and ends of paper, margins of magazines and rejection slips, back and insides of envelopes and wrappers. Probably every editor who uses any quantity of humor or short miscellany will recognize to whom we refer by this brief identification. We have an idea that he keeps on hand a supply of envelopes addressed to each of the editors with whom he does business, into which he stuffs his random notes until they just tip the scales at two ounces, when they are mailed out. One of his recent enclosures, on an irregular scrap of what looks like a piece of AUTHOR & JOURNALIST wrapper, reads thus: "I always pre-

sume my wholesale economies of envelopes and materials—mere conveniences and externals—will not affect ye ed's impression of my perfectly good MSS."

Perhaps not, in the case of this writer, whose idiosyncrasy has become a mark of individuality, a sort of trade mark, recognized at a glance by editors who know his work. But as a general policy, we are certain it would react against a writer far more than enough to offset the infinitesimal economy of paper. All of us—editors included—are affected by externals. If a writer resorts to obvious economies we are likely to gain the impression that he is not very successful—and if he is not successful it may be that there is a reason.

A business house that has made a study of the psychological effect of stationery advanced this rule: "Always use at least as good a grade of paper as that used by the average person with whom you are dealing." For writers submitting their wares to the general markets, this would imply the advisability of using a good grade of rag bond paper. It may be of light weight—what is known as 16 pound is most practical—but should have a stiff, "crinkly" feel. Except for transitory purposes, avoid the cheaper sulphide papers sold under the name of bond. The latter, or even the still cheaper railroad manilla or news print paper, may be used in submitting regular correspondence. As a rule, newspaper workers are accustomed to use news print for "copy" paper, and a manuscript on such paper, which bears the earmarks of having been dashed off in a newspaper office, may command attention above a manuscript written on cheap bond paper. Even aside from the cheapening atmosphere of cheap paper, it is ordinarily economical to use good bond paper for manuscripts because they will wear better—retain their freshness after repeated submissions—while cheap paper becomes creased and dog-eared with but little handling.

WHAT IS THE DISTRIBUTION which a novel by a new writer may expect to attain? This question has been quite definitely answered by J. W. Hiltman, president of D. Appleton & Company, in a *Printers' Ink* article. Mr. Hiltman observes:

"There are less than 3000 book stores in America at the present time. These book stores are confronted with the problem of buying 10,000 new titles and 250,000 old titles each season. None of them can afford to carry any such stock as this, and most of them are not only obliged carefully to pick the books they can handle, but are unable to buy more than a few copies of any one title. Therefore, if a publisher gets an initial distribution of 2000 copies of a new novel by a new author, he is doing well. In a sense, every book is a gamble and the life of the average novel is very short. With such distribution, and with a high initial expense for composition, plates and printing, a publisher cannot afford to spend more than 20 cents a copy to advertise the novel. This would

give him, at the most, \$400 to spend on his initial sale. If the book is one of poetry, history, travel, and so forth, the sum will be even smaller."

Each book, in other words, is given its chance with about \$400 worth of advertising. Should this "splash" fail to put it across, the book is allowed to fall by the wayside and the publisher tries out some other commodity. Should the book happen to gather momentum from the initial impetus and show promise of becoming a big seller, the publisher may get behind it with a much larger advertising appropriation, in order to make the most of its comparatively brief life of popularity. In case of a book by an author with a wide following, a much more extensive initial advertising plan usually is launched—witness the recent record-breaking splurge of Harold Bell Wright's publishers. It is a case of "the more boosting you need, the less you get," as newcomers in the book mart usually discover.

VARIETY, in a recent issue, makes this hopeful assertion (though without justification as far as we can observe): "The 'pay on acceptance' plan urged by many members of the Authors' League for all magazines, is gradually being taken up by the 'pay on publication' periodicals. The withholding of material won them around. Making an agreement among themselves, the authors kept away much or all material from the 'pay on publication' magazines, until they would come around to the 'pay on acceptance' idea. Deprived of matter, the periodicals in bad standing were forced to do just that, and are now paying on acceptance. There are still some paying on publication. These will undoubtedly continue that method while authors remain willing to sell on that basis. Only when every author refuses to sell unless on acceptance will the 'pay on publication policy' be done away with altogether."

FROM TIME TO TIME, prize contest announcements reach us which are clearly not in conformity with post office regulations. Publishers and others proposing to announce prize competitions would do well in all cases to submit their plans to the postal authorities. When the rules require that contestants must be subscribers to a publication or purchasers of some commodity, these rules clearly violate the law prohibiting an entrance fee, which brings the contest within the lottery class. It is also required that a contest must offer as many first prizes as there are identical answers to the conditions laid down for the winning of the first prize. If there are three correct and equally meritorious answers that should be given the first prize, then that prize must be given in the full amount to each of the three contestants. It cannot be divided. Again, the time limit must be of reasonable duration, so that every person in the territory appealed to will have sufficient time in which to compete.



# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

May, 1926

## Wilson Collison on "This Writing Business"

AN INTERVIEW BY ANZONETTA COLLISON



WILSON COLLISON

Courtesy Robert H. Davis

HE IS A HARD young man to make talk, this Wilson Collison. But I remember having heard him make this remark more than a year ago: "Some day, I must write a little article for that great little magazine, *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST*. Those fellows are doing a great deal for writers, and they ought to have expressions and information from writers who have achieved some success." But being the wife of this same Wilson Collison, I knew he would never write it. He is always busy. It is hard to pin him down. But I did. Because I knew he would never write that article, I decided to make him answer some questions—familiar ones which authors are always asking. So I cornered him in his study in an apartment overlooking the Hudson river in New York and said: "Give me fifteen minutes—you might send out a note of encouragement to some weary writers." "Shoot!" he said, lighting a cigarette and shoving his typewriter away with a vague smile.

"What are editors like?" I asked first, knowing that he was personally acquainted with many of them.

"The finest lot of hard-working gentlemen (and ladies) in the world!" he came back

enthusiastically. "I have never seen one with a grouch, one who wouldn't spend thirty minutes talking to a writer nor one who didn't say 'What we want, first of all, is stories.'"

"Do they really buy stories?" I then questioned naively.

"As many of them as they can find," he answered gravely. "Every editor offers the same tale: 'We receive freight loads of paper and not enough good stories of the kind we want to fill our magazines. So we buy the best we can get—and some of them are pretty poor. The demand for good stories was never so great as it is today. The presses simply chew them up faster than we can get them. No writer turning out acceptable stuff can overload us. We sometimes have on hand as many as fifteen stories by the same author—and would buy thirty if we could get them.'"

"My goodness!" I said, aghast. "And I thought everyone in the U. S. A. was bombarding the magazines with fiction."

"That's the trouble," he said tersely. "Magazine editors are buried under masses of paper and words—not stories."

"I see," I returned humbly. "They're just increasing the sale of typewriters. Well, then, is there really any chance for the unknown writer?"

"A ridiculous question, but one asked by every new writer in America!" he shot out. "Aside from the handful of 'big' publications, there isn't a popular magazine editor alive who would give you a nickel for a big name and a bad story. The big names and bad stories all go into the maga-

zines which pay five and ten cents a word. And don't overlook the fact that a majority of the 'names' today all started with the popular fiction magazines. It is a great training school, and a hard one—because you have to put something into your stories for those boys. They buy plot, action and careful writing. In the 'big' magazines I have seen shocking grammar, limping plots and pitiful style. In several so-called sex-magazines, issued by one publisher, and frowned upon by the high-brows, I have seen smooth-flowing style, beautiful English and a polish which would shame some of our best-selling novelists."

I pondered for a brief instant. Then: "Are there too many writers?"

"There can never be too many writers. There have never been too many. I have yet to see a conscientious, hard-working author turn out a good story that he could not sell. I recently finished a story and placed it with an editor whose schedule was crowded for months to come. An editor would cry like a baby if a really good story were taken away from him. Yes, there are too many people trying to write—and too few of them actually writing."

"H'm," I sighed, thinking of my novel which had been rejected by six publishers and was on its seventh trip, "you send out encouraging tone-waves. Do you think writing is a profession or a trade?"

"A trade," he smiled whimsically. "I have had countless arguments on this score with inspired and uninspired writers. The successful writer works from three to six hours a day, and looks upon himself much in the same light as a bricklayer or a plumber—doing the best work he knows how and gaining a good, substantial living from it."

"Now," I said eagerly, "you have led me right up to the most important question in the minds of all those well-meaning people who want to write: Is it possible to earn a living by writing magazine fiction?"

He frowned a little at this question and seemed to be weighing his answer.

"It all depends upon what sort of living an author can be satisfied with," he said half-humorously. "And it depends upon the author, too—his facility, his ability to turn out large quantities of material. The limited writer, the one who can do not more than a thousand words a day of all-fiction type, may earn from one to two hundred dollars a month. This is figuring upon an

output of, say, 20,000 words a month. At a cent a word, if he rings the bell completely, he gets two hundred—a fifty-per-cent ring would net him one hundred dollars. Every writer has a different method, a greater or lesser capacity. When I write fiction steadily (which I rarely do) I turn out not less than a hundred thousand words a month. My average of sales has been eighty per cent. A little more than a year ago, I devoted five months to steady fiction writing, as a source of amusement and as an experiment. My return was thirty-six hundred dollars. My highest word rate was three cents, my lowest one cent. A prolific writer, with the knack of hitting eager markets, will get from thirty-five hundred to eight thousand a year, working steadily as he would on any other job. It is possible, of course, to make much more. A slow-working writer, a limited writer, will find the going rough—with an average yearly yield of from six hundred to fifteen hundred dollars—far less than he could make in any trade or other business. There are wealthy authors and starving ones."

I watched him while he lighted a cigarette.

I looked over his desk to see if I could gain any knowledge of his working methods. There were only two books on his desk: Allen's Synonyms and Antonyms and Oxford Dictionary. On a small stand beside him were several copies of *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST*, an *Author's League Bulletin*, and the manuscript of his new play.

"Well?" he said impatiently, rising and crossing the room, where he paused to feed a string-bean to a pet ring-tailed monkey. "have you finished with the third degree?"

"Heaven help me!" I tossed at him. "I know there are more things I want to ask—but what are they? Oh, just murmur a few generalities—just tell us what you know about writing."

"What do I know about it?" he asked, with a smile, picking up the monkey, Dodo, and standing him on his head. "The more a writer writes, the more he tries to learn about, the less he knows. After a certain number of years, you discover that you have unconsciously absorbed technique. You know what you can and cannot do. Some of the things we write are very good and some mighty bad. The simple law of average prevails always. We cannot sell ev-

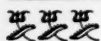
ery story we write, we cannot have every play produced we fashion. From eighteen to twenty-five I wrote more than a hundred short-stories and sold a dozen of them. The game looked hopeless. I turned back to playwriting. At twenty-eight, I achieved my first big hit—a play which made me a fortune. Others followed. Then the fiction bug began to tickle me again. Now that I am thirty-four, I can sell almost every story I write. Why? Experience. Maturity. I have lived long enough to know life. To know realities. Editors want life in their stories. And how can a writer write of life unless he knows it?" He shrugged and I saw three grey hairs over his right ear. "Young writers ask me how to write—and I simply tell them that the way to write is to write. As many words a day as they can. To study, to read—not the masters, but the present day writers. A terse style is necessary today. The movies have brought action into vogue. You must learn to write action, but action does not mean pistol shots, fist fights and falling timbers. Make your stories move. The technique of the short-story is simple enough. It is precisely like the technique of the well-written drama. You divide it into three parts: The Beginning, the Middle and the End. I think there are hundreds, possibly thousands, of writers who write exceedingly well. But they have not learned to tell a story. As my friend, Bob Davis, of the Munsey publications, once said to me: 'This is a beautiful piece of work—but there is no story at all, kid.' So I tossed it into the waste-basket and wrote him a story and got a fat check. Yes, the story is the thing!"

"You ask me to tell you what I know of fiction-writing. But you must remember that I am, by profession, a playwright, and that my fiction-writing has not been a steady thing. I write fiction when I am in the mood, when I am tired of working over plays. In the past two years, I have sold more than one hundred stories—and the actual working time consumed was scarcely more than eight months. It would be useless for me to tell young writers how I turn out so much work. Kindly editors have told me that I possess a marvelous facility and an easy, readable style. No, I do not

work out my plots in advance. Life and human emotions are not things to be measured with a yard-stick. I simply write. Yes, right on the typewriter. I start with a line and go on telling a story. Sometimes I sit back and think about the next twist. The world is full of stories. They are all around you. A short-story is, after all, merely a dramatic or comical incident in the lives of several characters. And the short-story is the thing to-day—with an average length of five to seven thousand words. There is an ever-increasing demand for the short-story. Short-stories are always marketable. They are never wasted energy. The market is apparent. You don't have to question it. I know of one publisher with three magazines who uses sixty short-stories a month.

"LET me say one more thing: I have no patience with those writers, amateur and professional, who are continually wielding the big 'knocking' club over editors' heads. In the past year, I have read a number of articles in *The Authors' League Bulletin* in which writers have flayed editors for paying low rates, for printing bad stories and a score of other things. Those writers are indiscreet and ungrateful. I reiterate that magazine editors are a fine lot of gentlemen. They pay the highest rates their business offices will allow them; they try their hardest to select the best stories; they are always kind and encouraging to all writers, known and unknown. I disagree with those whining writers who frequently remark that magazine editors are only a disappointed lot of would-be writers themselves, that because they failed in the writing game, they attempt to keep others out of it. Those are the thoughts and the statements of writers unfit to succeed. At best, all forms of writing make a game that stacks up as hard. But editors play their side of the game like gentlemen and good sportsmen; writers who cannot do the same should seek other lines where they can knock and be knocked in turn."

All in all, I thought that Mr. Collison had passed out some illuminating information. Do you agree with me?



## Harold Bell Wright Says Selection Puts Genius to the Test

BY EFFIE LEESE SCOTT



HAROLD BELL WRIGHT

IN the very earliest moments of his writing life Harold Bell Wright realized that there were two things he must have if he ever expected to achieve — a big wastebasket and the grace of God to use it!

When an author whose books sell by the millions contends that these two things were the dependable rocks upon which he built the foundation for his success and adds further emphasis by bringing his hand down vigorously on the arm of his chair, there must be something worth considering in the advice.

Mr. Wright, while quite willing to chat informally concerning his methods, declines formal interviews and does not allow any one to quote him directly, for the reason that in times past he has been so grossly misquoted.

An individualist in the author-world is this widely read novelist, whose twelfth story, "The Son of His Father" is now galloping around the world and stampeding its way through one edition after another, and who has thirteen more novels in the making.

In delving around the Wright workshop in an effort to discover how the author obtains material and his method of handling it, one learns first of all that Mr. Wright has evolved his own technique and does his stories in his own peculiar way. He does not believe in the existence of a universal liter-

ary recipe, but holds that anyone who aspires to pass through the editorial gates which guard magazine pay-stations must work out his own salvation. Kipling is great because he is Kipling; Conrad is Conrad, he is individual; and no one can combine a Kipling method with a Conrad formula and make a Stevenson story.

To develop a story-technique satisfactory to himself Mr. Wright served an apprenticeship lasting fifteen years—an apprenticeship to the wastebasket! During that time he read voraciously, studied life from every angle, kept copious notebooks and wrote prolifically lines, paragraphs and pages, and at times full-length stories. Frequently he tried stories out on his friends. These friends applauded as friends have a habit of doing, but it was not until Mr. Wright himself felt that he had a story worth while, both as to interest and craftsmanship, that his first novel, "That Printer of Udell's," went to a publisher. It was accepted immediately and acceptances only have been his reward ever since.

Harold Bell Wright has never received an editorial rejection slip! His explanation is that he has merely saved the editors the trouble by rejecting his stories himself. In other words, he has had the grace of God to use the wastebasket and he infers that the manuscript pages which have gone into it greatly outnumber those submitted to publishers.

As for Mr. Wright's working plan—the first thing he does is to be sure that he has a story to tell. With him, the story comes first; everything else follows. When starting to build fiction he keeps two distinct ideas in mind—the story itself and the telling of it. He likens them to the candle-flame and the light it sheds. The story is definitely outlined and from then on it is



considered as a whole. Then comes a detailed study of everything that is to go into the story, including the selection of characters with cautious attention to choice of the right types—those who will fit naturally into the atmosphere of a ranch or a mining story, or whatever the case may be; who will harmonize throughout with the action planned.

If by this time a setting has not popped into existence the author goes in pursuit of one; occasionally it takes years to find the right one.

As a specific example of the way in which he develops his stories, the building of "The Winning of Barbara Worth" may be cited.

This story was seven years in the making. The germ for the thematic plot sprouted about the time the country was rife with threatened trouble between capital and labor; capital was using labor as a means to further its own ends; labor everywhere was organizing and viewing capitalists as its enemy. While actively interested in the problem, Mr. Wright was inspired with this idea: Why not have these two great forces unite in some big project for the betterment of all mankind? From this idea the plot began to grow but when only partially developed it lodged in the author's brain and there it remained for several years, though keeping him consciously aware of its presence. Some time later he made a trip to the Imperial Valley, where a big irrigation scheme was being launched. There the satisfying setting for the story flashed before him.

Visualization of the setting, however, was followed by the realization that the story would have to be an engineering story. Mr. Wright makes it his rule, if he doesn't know all the ins and outs of a subject, to remedy the deficiency by getting next to the fellow who does. In this case he didn't know a great deal about engineering, neither did he personally know anyone who did. So he began a serious study of engineering, joined the gang working in the valley, stayed with it for many days carrying the chain, or doing anything he could get to do.

Time sped along and the plot for the story of Barbara Worth grew, but not yet could Mr. Wright see the story as a whole. He made it a point to visit personally with the engineers as they came and went; yet the story seemed at a standstill. But there

came a night when he had an intimate heart-to-heart talk with one of his companion-workers with a big box of Havanas between them. The visit lasted till dawn, but just before the sun actually shone on the new day the complete story of *The Winning of Barbara Worth* unfolded. Quickly the character folks arrived and the writing followed.

Before the story went to the publishers Mr. Wright had it tested through and through for accuracy of the engineering details. Not wishing to rely wholly upon his own newly acquired knowledge he had all the engineers in camp read the manuscript, chapter by chapter. In this way all references to engineering technicalities were carefully checked and verified.

This plan of verifying details is a part of the Wright system. Scores of cowboys read "When a Man's a Man," before it went to a publisher.

The plan of keeping the story visualized as a whole throughout the period of its construction is strictly adhered to, with the end of the story—that is, the solution of the problem propounded by the theme—the goal toward which everything must aim.

The author usually visualizes an imaginary lane, fenced on either side, through which the story people must travel. The farther end is the goal. The actors are given entire freedom as they move along, but they must stay within the enclosure.

Occasionally the story folks refuse to do the things planned for them; but if their unexpected actions harmonize with the plan, let them alone, is the Wright rule. Occasionally some recalcitrant fellow jumps the fence; if he is too stubborn about returning Mr. Wright is likely to let him go; if he is indispensable to the plot the author may do a lot of coaxing to get him back. In one story in which a character "refused" to play inside, Mr. Wright let him talk over the fence, that is, he quoted him. When an extra leaps into the story uninvited he is often permitted to stay, provided he helps things along; if he hinders he is tossed aside. But all the time, while the story folks are acting, even doing the prankish things, there remains in the mind of the author an undisturbed vista of the story as a whole.

From Mr. Wright's point of view there are as many ways to get plots as there are stories; and there is no particular rule for

anyone to follow; one who is alertly observant is usually overcrowded with plot ideas and Mr. Wright himself would have to live through several lives if he would work into novels even a small part of his stock of ideas on hand. His stories are, as a rule, thematic, built from a plot idea that may have been suggested in any of a thousand and one ways.

Sometimes it is a chance remark that starts the plot to germinating. This happened one night at a dinner where the guests discussed at length the crowning of a certain king, and one of them commented that the greatest kings of earth are never crowned. This formed the basis of the only pure allegory Mr. Wright has written, "The Uncrowned King." A continuous repetition of the idea that to succeed one must have a personal pull, and the further observation that many persons with whom he had been intimately associated were apparently putting in a goodly portion of their time catering to and courting the favor of prominent folks, suggested the germ of the plot that eventually grew into "The Eyes of the World."

Story characters must be very much alive if they are to do any acting for Mr. Wright. His people are compositely drawn and are representative types. A deep student of human nature, he makes it his business to know all classes of people, how they talk, act and react, not only normally but under emotional stress and when placed in unusual environments. Of course, the illusion must be preserved for the reader that the characters are really living individuals. Frequently in the crowded Wright mailbox there is a letter from—say Brown of West-cliff, commenting that he is sure that he has met the Reverend Blank of a certain story and inquiring whether his supposition is true. It is true, yet it is equally true that the Reverend Blank lives not only in West-cliff but in Denver, Santa Fe, Kalamazoo and a hundred other places.

In using description Mr. Wright insists that it must be such as is needed as a background for the incidents or the characters; it must not overshadow them; it must never halt the story. As he views it, the underlying principle that should govern description is a thorough knowledge of words and their shades of meaning. In his opinion, no one

can overdo the matter of word study; hunt for the right word till you find it, he insists; and be sure your words are telling the reader exactly what you want them to tell. If they don't—the story may tinkle, but it won't tingle. If you can't make the story tingle—there's the wastebasket—have the grace of God to use it.

What are the mechanics of a Wright story as it travels from author to publisher?

Mr. Wright works regularly, prefers the morning hours, but sets no minimum for the day's output. Sometimes he does five thousand words at a sitting; again he has sat for five hours and written only five lines and these have gone into the wastebasket. But when he does write he believes in writing with the passion of fire, then, when the copy gets cool, judging it with the coldness of ice. The ability to judge his own manuscripts impersonally is undoubtedly an element that has contributed toward this author's success.

His stories are first written in longhand with a lead pencil. When the first draft is completed it is typed with double spacing and wide margins. This copy is revised and again typed and the process is continued as long as the author thinks it necessary. The story is first revised as a whole; later the details are looked after, usually line by line. As the revision proceeds many pages find their way to the wastebasket.

A rule for the number of times a story should be revised? There is none. "The Eyes of the World" was rewritten eight times.

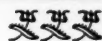
Can revision be overdone? Is there danger of the plan destroying an author's spontaneity?

According to Mr. Wright it is the law of selection that puts genius to the test. One must learn what is irrelevant—be sure that what is left really belongs.

In closing, the author said—but alas! direct quotes are forbidden. However, the impression the interviewer gained was as if he had given this advice: Rewrite and rewrite and rewrite and rewrite, and keep on rewriting until you can lay your story down and say: Now, that's as good as I can do it; I can't take another word from it nor add one to it.

And once more the hand of Harold Bell Wright came down with emphasis on the arm of his chair.

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## “Snowballing” a Plot

BY WILLARD E. HAWKINS

(This series began in the October, 1925, issue.)

BY the term “snowballing” a plot, I do not mean throwing things at it. No doubt, many plots need such drastic action, but in this case the phrase has been coined to express the process of rolling up ideas as a huge snowball is rolled, by turning the nucleus over and over, with an added accumulation at each revolution.

The experienced writer does not attempt the Herculean task of writing a story out of hand. There is an easy, simple way of going about plot building, as opposed to harder and more harrowing methods. Forcing their plots into premature crystallization is one of the mistakes of ambitious writers. Instead of rolling up a natural, symmetrical, well-packed ball of ideas, they punch their thoughts together into a lumpy, awkward, insecure mass.

Practically all successful authors have adopted the plan of turning their ideas over and over in order to perfect them. The principle lies behind many idiosyncrasies of genius. Charles Hoyt developed a play by repeatedly talking over the plot with long-suffering acquaintances. Each time, the outline would be slightly elaborated and strengthened. When it was, so to speak, rolled and packed to his satisfaction, he was ready to commence the actual composition.

Balzac’s method was to write out his ideas in preliminary form and then have them set up in type. When the proof came from the printer, he would cut down, revise, and greatly elaborate—until there was no more room for insertions. This copy went again to the printer for correction and a new proof sheet was returned. Gradually, the nucleus would be rolled up into its final form. No doubt, the author of the *Comédie Humaine* would have simplified his method, had he lived in this day of the typewriter.

For the majority of writers, the most satisfactory method is to select a theme, then devise characters and incidents to illuminate it. I am convinced that the wrong way to go about fiction building is to look for actual incidents upon which to hang stories. The advice, “study the newspapers for plot suggestions,” is responsible for two-thirds of the commonplace, mediocre stories with which the editors are bombarded. Read the newspapers—yes; be alert to what is going on; in every possible way keep your ears attuned to life and human nature. But employ the insight thus gained to make your purely imaginary incidents convincing.

The only way in which, as a rule, an actual incident may be effectively employed in plot manufacture is to dissect the incident and extract the principle that it illustrates, then employ that as the theme of a purely imaginary story.

LET us, by way of illustration, set about to reproduce the mental process of “snowballing” a plot. As I write these lines, I have no notion what theme I will select for development, but I have a definite idea of the way to go about finding it. A calm, confident, unhurried attitude of mind is of great importance. The idea, once found, must be allowed to grow naturally and of its own accord, into a symmetrical story. Our part is to keep turning it over and over, so that an accumulation of ideas may have a chance to adhere to the basic conception.

The first essential, of course, is the idea. And, remembering that actual incidents are likely to make commonplace material, instead of culling over the yellow newspapers or searching through our notebooks, we will look within ourselves for some thought of sufficient importance to be worthy of im-

pressing on readers through the medium of fiction.

This basic idea, or theme, may be almost any abstract principle, ideal, or bit of philosophy. "When Fortune flatters, she does it to betray," wrote Publius Syrus. This suggests the story of an unworthy man whose nature is betrayed by the use he makes of his money. "Mother love" is an abstract idea capable of illustration in many striking ways. "Intuition is more trustworthy than reason"—if you think so, prove your point by endowing a certain character with intuition, another with reason, and turning the conception over until it evolves into a plot.

A hundred such themes present themselves on the spur of the moment; they contain possibilities, but not all of them appeal to us as being our particular story—the one we wish to develop. We are exacting.

Let's see—suppose we develop a story on the subject of "Heredity." That, however, has been used a good many times in fiction, so the chances are that we would be wasting our effort upon it. Try again. For a good, live subject, how does the word "preparedness" sound? Not so bad, as we consider it. Rightly handled, that word may serve as the nucleus for our snowball. Here it is, then, a tiny, compact ball of possibilities:

*Preparedness.*

Now for the initial turn over. The first thing we notice is that this word has two poles. We shall have to take a definite stand—our story must prove something. Are we for, or against?

It happens that we are neutral; but just to get started, we decide to make our story prove the "anti" side. The first roll of our snowball, thus evolves into this form:

*The best protection is non-preparedness.*

Second turn. Questions now begin to arise. What characters shall we select? In what setting shall we place the story? Shall we involve two European countries, or perhaps the United States and some other nation? Not if we are wise. That will take the subject entirely out of our reach—and anyway, this situation is what suggested our theme. The farther we get away from it, the more likely we shall be to maintain a clear perspective.

Short-story unity of impression depends largely upon limiting the cast to the fewest

possible characters. Our situation must be one involving not more than two or three persons. And the reader's interest must be centered, in particular, upon a certain one of these characters.

Let us take stock of our idea and its present accumulation:

*The theme that the best policy is unpreparedness is to be illustrated by a small cast centering around one character. This character is to pursue the policy of unpreparedness and to win out by it in a situation that ordinarily would be met with armed resistance.*

Third turn. This does not as yet look like a story; still, it is quite an elaboration upon our original snowball. At least, we know what general type of situations and characters are needed.

**N**OW, it will be a good plan to consider several tentative settings and situations:

Suppose we place the scene in society. A number of debutantes may be arming themselves with feminine weapons of conquest, the object being preparedness for the attack when a titled foreigner comes wife hunting. Surely there is a story in the capture of this lion by a simple little maiden who has been too artless (or artful, as the case may be) to prepare for conquest.

But that does not altogether suit us; some better use of the material may suggest itself. Suppose we transpose the gender and shift the scene from society to frontier. Surely, if preparedness is capable of standing the test, it will have good opportunity of doing so in a typical mining camp, where every man carries a gun and is prepared to use it at an instant's notice. Among all these hair-trigger natures, a "Prince of Peace" who refuses to decorate his person with hardware, may be a unique personality. We might have him confronted by armed bandits while carrying a fortune in gold down an unfrequented trail. It seems not impossible to devise a situation in which his lack of armament saves his life and enables him to retain the gold.

Or, we might transpose the scene to the University. Picture the "grind" who is studying night and day in preparation for life, while his frivolous roommate, who does not believe in preparedness, has a good time. According to the fable of the Grasshopper and the Ants, the grind is due to come out



on top; but it will not be difficult for us to write a story in which the roommate, who devoted less time to preparation, stumbles into the fat, responsible position, while the grind becomes one of his clerks.

But that is hackneyed. We dismiss the idea for the present.

We might lay the scene on the border of Mexico, letting an unprotected American save himself and his family by means of a striking policy of disarmament. Or we might—

But, after all, the mining camp suggestion contains good possibilities for a vital illustration of our theme. We may tentatively decide upon it and proceed with our rolling process. This is how we now stand:

*That unpreparedness is the best protection is to be proved in a gold-camp setting, by a hero who refuses to adopt preparedness. While burdened with treasure, he is confronted by bandits. The situation is such that, if he had been armed, he would have been killed. As a direct result of being unarmed, he escapes both with his life and his treasure.*

Fourth turn. That phrase, "As a direct result of being unarmed," is important. The story must satisfy this condition. If there is no clear connecting link between our hero's escape and his lack of arms, our anti-preparedness demonstration will fall flat.

We know now that our hero is going to get the best of the highwaymen through being unarmed; but the details are slow in materializing. However, the preliminary situation is not difficult to imagine. It has, so to speak, adhered to our nucleus without any particular effort on our part. We begin to visualize the situation. There must be a central character, the advocate of non-preparedness. And his presence seems to call for a contrast with some more warlike character who is violently in favor of "gun toting." It is easy to imagine these two as partners, riding along with the treasure between them—arguing the question of its safe transport. The hero advocates leaving all weapons at home. His partner has insisted upon stocking up with artillery. They arrive at a dangerous pass, where their theories are put to the test. Opposed by a superior force, their fight seems certain to be a losing one. So we have an opportunity to compare the tactics in actual practice.

This has been quite a turn-over. Let us pause and warm our hands, while proudly

surveying the present state of our snowball.

*Steve Anti, and his partner, Scotty Pro, are wending their way to town, heavily laden with gold dust from their rich placer in the hills. Buck McGinnis and his band of outlaws are known to be at large in the neighborhood. Buck's reputation is a fright! He openly flaunts a trophy consisting of a huge diamond plucked from the necktie of a capitalist tenderfoot. Steve Anti laments the display of hardware he has been persuaded to hang around his belt, protesting that it simply invites attack. Scotty has never heard such foolishness! How are they going to protect their gold without fighting? The argument waxes warm, but remains unsettled, when they approach Dead Man's Gulch, where the outlaws are known to lie in wait. Unable to agree as to a mode of procedure, the two decide to part company. The gold is divided and distributed inconspicuously about the person of each man. Then Steve passes his rifle, his revolver, and his ammunition, over to Scotty, whose warlike nature revels in being thus doubly armed. They draw lots. The winner is to take the lead, the other to follow fifteen minutes behind him. Neither, in any circumstances, is to jeopardize his share of the gold by coming to the other's assistance in case of trouble.*

OUR snowball is now growing cumbersome. Already we have the scene, the characters, and a stage all set for the climax. The nature of that climax is in mind, but we are hazy about details. The best plan, since our characters seem to have come to life so readily, and to be displaying such marked individuality, is to follow them. Maybe the author will learn something from his creations. Already we have commenced to have a lot of respect for Steve Anti. He seems such an original thinker—and look at the risk he is taking, just for the sake of an ideal. We suspect that he will prove thrillingly audacious in a pinch. Let's see, he is tall and sinewy, and he looks like a Christy hero, except that the razor slipped a couple of times as he was hacking loose a month's growth of whiskers before starting to town. He has the eyes of a dreamer combined with the firm chin of action; and something about his mouth suggests a keen sense of humor. As for Scotty—well, though he wasn't thought of in time for the leading role, still we can't help a sneaking sympathy for the man. He is certainly full of ginger. One look at his bristling red hair—he took no chances with the razor—is enough to tell us that he is spoiling for a fight. Knowing our climax in advance, of course we realize that Scotty hasn't a chance at the show-down,

and it is a trifle difficult not to feel sorry for him. If Scotty knew this, he would scornfully tell us to save our pity for the outlaws.

Time's up. Now for another look at our snowball.

*The toss-up results in giving Steve Anti the first chance to find out the truth regarding a Here-after. Stripped of all defensive weapons, he rides forth; even his coat has been abandoned, in order that his absolute unpreparedness may be apparent at a glance. A solidly filled belt of gold is the only object surrounding his waist. He rides through the pass and is not in any way molested. His psychology begins to look reasonable. Why should bandits attack a man who obviously has nothing about him worth carrying a weapon to defend? So he—*

But this fraction of a turn makes us realize that the climax of our story is going to be without dramatic action. We are proving our point in altogether too peaceful and uneventful a way. It will never do to disappoint the reader, who has been led to think there will be a real encounter with bandits. We now must contrive to bring them on the scene. Amended, our outline therefore reads:

*Steve rides through the pass but a short distance, when he is suddenly confronted by half a dozen armed bandits. They are strangers to him, but he recognizes the dreaded Buck McGinnis by the famous diamond flashing from his shirt front. "Stop and give an account of yourself!" is the terrible command. Steve obeys, though he regrets that those who make the request belong to the dark ages of preparedness. "Seen anything of a sorrel horse?" inquires Steve nonchalantly, rolling a cigarette.*

*There being no show of resistance, the highwaymen are not quite sure it is worth their while to parley with this stranger. Steve dismounts. "Where you going?" demands McGinnis. "Thought I'd take a look down this gully," responds Steve, as he starts off. The bandits glance at one another. "Come back," yells McGinnis. "Your sorrel ain't down there. Jump on your nag and hurry—get to blazes out o' here!" So Steve, apparently against his will, is not only passed up by the gang as unworthy their prowess, but even assisted on his way. They don't want him around.*

*A short distance down the road, he draws rein, listening tensely. There it comes! A sudden rattle of shots. He knows that Scotty is putting up a good fight, but the odds against him make the result a foregone conclusion. Steve, forgetful of the compact, spurs his horse to the aid of his unfortunate partner. But the shots suddenly cease—it is all over. Sadly, Steve resumes his townward journey. How foolish to make an arsenal of oneself, thus inviting destruction!*

*Arriving at his destination, he enters a thirst emporium and breaks the news. It is sad news, for Scotty was well liked by these rough miners and frontiersmen. "Poor Scotty," murmurs many a voice, as our story comes to a close. "He was a mighty fine little cuss—but too all-fired 'prepared' for a scrap to get along well in this world."*

So there we have the final roll of the snowball. It can be given much further polishing, and the actual narration is still to be accomplished; but our nucleus has truly developed into a definitely rounded story. The point has been clearly illustrated— But wait a minute! Wait a minute!

Our snowball has taken another complete flop, before we could prevent. Who walks into the thirst emporium, and into the story again, but the late lamented Scotty! We stare with eyes as wide as any frontiersman present, including Steve—but if that isn't Scotty, staggering in the door under two rifles and a wagon load of belts and ammunition, it certainly is his earth-bound spirit. That he isn't an apparition quickly becomes apparent.

*"Gimme whiskey and make it straight!" he roars, in approved Western style. "I'm dying o' thirst." He glares around balefully, until his eyes light on the open-mouthed Steve. "Why the Sam Hill didn't you come back and give me a lift with all this junk?" he demands. "Whadda you think I am—a pack mule?"*

*So saying, he disburdens himself of half a dozen well-filled money belts, enough revolvers to supply the whole camp, and last, but not least, Buck McGinnis's much-flaunted diamond. "Run out, some o' you scum," he barks, setting down the emptied glass, "and see if the batch o' hosses I corralled on the way down is tied fast to the hitching bar. I had too big a thirst to make sure."*

IT is a shame; Scotty ought not to have done it; but he was a trouble-maker from the first. Remember how he broke into the cast when he wasn't even considered in the original line-up, and how he made us have a sort of sneaking liking for him in spite of his taking the wrong side of the argument? Now, at the last, he comes bursting in to take away all the hero's laurels. He's a rank usurper.

But it is to be feared we'll have to leave him in, because the one unpardonable sin in plot making is to let your story come out exactly as it seems destined to. Prove your point, yes; but also watch your opportunity to introduce some twist at the conclusion which gives the whole subject an altered complexion.

Such, in brief, is a working illustration of "snowballing" a plot. Far from being difficult, it is as easy as one desires to make it—and intensely interesting. Let a day or so elapse for each turning over, if desired. Then, in the evening, write down just as much or as little as has accumulated around the idea since the last time it was reduced to paper. We couldn't have jumped at once from the nucleus idea to the final story, "A Matter of Preparedness." So we put down what we knew of the story, then turned it over until something more came to mind, and kept up the process until a moment was reached when the idea came to life and we were startled to find that our abstract thought had grown into a full-fledged story outline, complete even to the twist in the conclusion.

AS to the story outline here "snowballed" into shape: What becomes of the artistic unity when we give it the twist? The story does not prove the theme with which we began, nor does it prove the opposite. True, but the purpose of the illustration was not so much to prove the original theme as to evolve a story. The original theme provided a starting point. Whatever value the illustration may possess is due to the fact

that in writing it I set down the reasoning as it came to me, starting with an open mind and desirous only to evolve a story—to show a plot in process of creation. Toward the last came the suggestion—"There's a chance for surprise in letting Scotty unexpectedly win out." Presto! the original theme was abandoned. It had served its purpose by furnishing the nucleus for a story. The suggested twist made it possible to illustrate a theme that is perhaps more significant than the original conception. We could express it: "Any strong policy vigorously carried through will be successful—it all depends on the individual."

Many object to the surprise ending or twist (which was so effectively used by O. Henry) on the ground that it is not artistic—that it is a mechanical device for securing effectiveness. To us, the arguments for and against stories with twisty conclusions simmer down to this: We find cheap twists and strong, significant twists in fiction, just as we see good poetry and doggerel, good and bad art of every description. At any rate, the twist or surprise ending is a forceful aid in the writing of marketable stories. Use it or not—as the occasion seems to demand.



## Artistry in Punctuation

By LLOYD E. SMITH

WE USUALLY pardon a master craftsman in words if he misplaces a comma now and then, and isn't really quite so meticulous as he might be in punctuating his inimitable phraseology. But punctuation can be taken too much as a mere incidental, rather than as a very valuable and effective accessory in the writer's craft. I've known youngsters in college—and I've heard that professional writers do it, too, though it is hard to believe—to write out their stuff first, without explanatory

marks of any kind, and then *go back and punctuate it!* Clearly, in such cases the poor chaps do not perceive that punctuation is as much a part of any composition as the words themselves.

Anyone who can read will grasp the varying meanings of the following:

"I love you."

"I love you!"

"I love you?"

Now if an author is completely in the spirit of the thing that is being created under his hand he will put in those marks, or whichever one fits the particular case, when he writes the words. He won't put down "I love you" in an unadorned, slipshod fashion, and later smoke a pipe over them to decide whether they are simple statement, passionate exclamation, or doubting repetition. That is, he won't do it that way unless he has never realized the full value of punctuation as a part of his stock in trade (or, maybe, in the careful revision of a scene which doesn't carry conviction). Punctuation, plus typographical arrangement, has to take the place, oftentimes, of vocal tones and mannerisms; in striving for his illusion of reality, or in Conrad's words, for the illusion more real than reality, the writer makes use of certain signs and symbols as an integral and inseparable part of the words he strings together.

Everyone knows how to use the period, exclamation and question marks correctly. Yes. But not everyone has an ingrained sense of how to use them for the best effect. In general, it may be said that the exclamation point is used far too often—so often that it loses its force, and there is a temptation, when a particularly strong exclamation must be marked, to use two or three exclamation points! That is very bad taste. It means that the writer has not understood the full value of the simple period.

The comma, a mark within sentences or sentence-like constructions, is quite another matter. Without going into all the pedantic rules for its use (which are very well worth studying to learn just how many things a comma can do), it can be remarked that it is used nowadays far less than it used to be. Contemporary writers, most all of them, tend to get along with as few commas as possible. It is essentially a pause-mark, used nearly always to maintain coherence of thought as well as coherence of reading. A comma is a guard against misunderstanding—not only a permanent misunderstanding which may destroy the reader's illusion, but a temporary misreading which may force a second or third perusal of the words in question in order to make sense out of them.

**M**OST writers punctuate by instinct, inserting commas whenever one seems to be needed. I do that. But I have

gone into the rules carefully, too. Now, when I say that I punctuate by instinct, I mean that as my fingers pound these words they are trained to hit out commas, say, every now and then, at points with which a comma is associated in my thought. For example, when I think of the parenthetical pause-word "say," in the previous sentence, I think of it set off by commas. I don't have to jog my memory with a rule, and I don't have to go back and put in necessary commas. Those commas are as much a part of "say"—used in that particular way—as the apostrophe is a part of "don't."

The colon and semicolon require even more care, even more perception of their natural propensities for expressing thought. Some authorities maintain that a semicolon is a half-period. Sometimes it is. But it can be a lot more than that, as an examination of the work of any literary craftsman will show. If two complete statements are very intimately related in their thought-content, and it is desirable to show this relation, two things may be done. They may be written as two separate sentences and placed in a paragraph by themselves. Or, if they are too much a part of other matter to be broken off into a separate paragraph, they may be joined by a semicolon, instead of separated by a period. You see: the period separates, the semicolon joins. Certainly a semicolon can never take the place of a comma; or, at least, a comma can never take the place of a semicolon! . . . The colon is properly a bridge. I like to use it, as I have already used it in this paragraph, as an indicator that something explanatory is to follow, or something extenuating, something carrying on the thought in a deliberately expanding way.

The man who studies punctuation a little will begin to see a great many possibilities, just as the man who studies words is able to use them originally. Joseph Conrad sometimes inserts, in the conversation of some character, parenthetical words which are not part of the talk, and he separates them with parentheses. I don't like that, because the parenthesis is too intimate a mark for such a definite separation. It is more precise, I think, to separate with a dash, and quotation marks, like this:

"I hardly agree with you—" although he thought he would have at any other time—"in any such assumption."

Please note the placing of the quotation

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marks—an important detail. Try the same thing with parentheses:

"I hardly agree with you (although he thought he would have at any other time) in any such assumption."

I think it is clear that this separation is not enough. The parentheses seem to indicate, not a parenthetical thought that is not spoken, but a parenthetical thought that is spoken—and for a dangerous moment the reader is led astray.

Quotation marks can irk a writer terribly. I once argued with an acquaintance about the placing of periods inside or outside quotation marks, and he couldn't see the distinction. He is not the only one! If a period, let us say, belongs with the quoted words, then it belongs inside the quotation marks. If the period belongs to a sentence which contains quoted words, but does not belong to the quoted words at all, then it *may* be placed outside. Usually, however, commas and periods are always placed inside quotation marks, by printers anyway, because the type looks better that way. Appearance is an important point, too, so a writer cannot always quarrel with that—unless perchance it damages the precision of his expression. Here are some examples:

*"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears."*

*If I may speak oratorically, "lend me your ears."*

*The universal attention was certainly a "loaning of ears".* (Or, for the sake of appearance—as is usually done—the period may be placed inside.)

However, semicolons, question marks, and exclamation points are *always* placed outside quotation marks unless they are a definite part of the quotation. Yes, colons, too, although such a juxtaposition is more rare.

Three or four periods in a row, or "leaders," may be used to signify omission of words. They may also be used, as by H. G. Wells, to signify pause, or perhaps a slightly more abrupt change in the thought. Again, they may be used, as by Joseph Conrad, to separate the matter of a paragraph into

bunches that are perhaps too closely related to be set out as separate paragraphs. I used a few periods like this a few paragraphs ago, and hope my purpose was not a vain one.

The writer of commercial fiction, or, indeed, of any fiction at all, is permitted only one typographical device that involves a change of font (in type), and that is the use of *italics*. It can be overdone. The slanting, script-like letters are usually reversed for emphasis in recording dialogue, or in setting down thoughts—either of the writer or of his characters. Sometimes, in technical discussions, italics serve as an indication of separation—they have been so used in this article, as well as for emphasis.

**B**UT what I intend to bring out is the fact that the writer has a great many possibilities open to him. He may explain his dialogue with descriptive words (sometimes he has to do so), or he may use certain marks of punctuation, or he may use a typographical device (paragraphing, italics). In all these there are no absolute equals—each method has its own merits, and its own precise significance. Why, that comma in the preceding sentence, for example, might be omitted. Suppose it were? Then the effect of the words would be slightly different: I would intend (however subtly) that the "merits" and the "significance" should be considered together in a single breath. As I have put it down, with a comma nicely lodged there, I intend (because I think of it that way) that the "significance" should be thought of distinctly, apart from and yet united with the "merits." Confound it, I could show you the difference if you could hear me read the words aloud—and that's what the goldarned comma is for: to show you how I would read it! Q. E. D.

Artistry in punctuation consists, then, in realizing the innate significance of these arbitrary signs *as an inseparable part of the composition*, amplifying and restricting the meaning of mere words.

# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST'S

## LITERARY MARKET TIPS

GATHERED MONTHLY FROM AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES

*The Ladies' Home Journal*, Independence Square, Philadelphia, informs a contributor: "Just at present we have a more than overloaded program of feature articles which must be run off during the next twelve months." *The Ladies' Home Journal* on its acceptance slip announces that it "buys all rights—dramatic and otherwise—of all stories and special articles appearing in it, with the understanding that each number shall be copyrighted at its expense. On demand, it agrees to reassign to the author all such rights except American (including Canadian) serial rights (second serial use not being permitted either before or after publication in book form). These rights include book, dramatic, moving-picture and foreign serial rights, together with the benefit of said copyrighting of each number of *The Ladies' Home Journal*. The purchase is made also on condition that the author shall not allow the story or article purchased to appear in any form until after publication in *The Ladies' Home Journal*, and shall make no sale of foreign serial rights which shall prevent the sending of copies in which the story or article appears to buyers of the monthly in foreign countries as usual."

*Sunset*, 460 Fourth Street, San Francisco, Calif., Joseph H. Jackson, associate editor, writes to a contributor: "*Sunset* is trying to get away from its past overuse of romantic-adventure, wild West, mystery and crime type of fiction. What we're looking for now are Western stories, to be sure, but chiefly Western stories of metropolitan life, young people, etc.—the new, modern West-as-it-is-today rather than the West of the woods, etc. Occasionally, perhaps, we'll use a Western adventure story of this type, but they'll be in the minority from now on. And we have a good deal of that sort of thing in the files now!"

*Boys' Own Magazine*, 116 W. Thirty-ninth Street, New York, "is pretty well stocked with material for the time being, but of course when a good story comes along we are ready to accept it," writes Jeanette W. Hungerford, editorial secretary. "We prefer stories from 2000 to 4000 words. Thrilling adventure with action is more of a requisite than plot. We have accepted serials sufficient to last us for five or six months at least. Our policy is to pay on acceptance at the rate of from 1 to 3 cents per word. All editorial correspondence should be directed to me."

*Outing*, 71-73 Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio, has been suspended.

*The Forum*, 247 Park Avenue, New York, Henry Goddard Leach, editor, describes its editorial policy thus: "It gives both sides, has no editorial axe to grind, and enters upon subjects long taboo in journalism—religion and race, for example. Its pages are open to Catholic and Kluxer, Fascist and anti-Fascist, 'Modernist' and 'Fundamentalist,' Pacifist and Militarist, Jew and '100 per cent Protestant American Nordic.' Contributors qualify on the score of their ability to speak with authority, with honesty, interestingly. They are expected to be frank. *The Forum* is not trying to breed discontent nor foment discord. It is attempting to interpret modern America by getting at 'the truth that lies somewhere between' and behind, clouded issues of the day. Naturally *The Forum* is not 'edited down' to the millions, nor is it highbrow."

*The Chicagoan*, 1604 Conway Building, Chicago, is a new magazine to appear June 1, which will be published by the Chicago Publishing Company. F. M. Rosen, president, writes: "*The Chicagoan* will be similar in general style, editorial policy, and contents to *The New Yorker*. It will foster criticism of the arts, and publish the best fiction and non-fiction, poetry and drawings, etc. that it can procure. It is to be a high-quality periodical and its chief function will be that of a reporter procuring news, editorials of informative value, as well as entertaining. We are soliciting contributions from authors with ability to write better prose than the ordinary commercial writer. We are not in a position to pay high rates, but as soon as our publication has achieved a fair degree of self-maintenance, we shall compensate such of our collaborators as have borne a portion of the burden."

*The American Mercury*, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, announces that before the end of the present year it will publish a Y. M. C. A. number in which there is yet room for one or two more articles. "Anyone desiring to be heard is invited to communicate with the editor."

*Smart Set*, 119 W. Fortieth Street, New York, in addition to its need for first-person short-stories and serials, is in the market for startling features told by well-known people. Payment is made at 3 cents a word on acceptance.

*Mystery Magazine*, 1133 Broadway, New York, reports that it is now paying 1 to 2 cents a word for material on acceptance.

*Wheeler-Nicholson, Inc., Newspaper Syndicate* has moved into larger quarters at 373 Fourth Avenue, New York. Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson, president, writes: "We are in the market for tabloid short-stories to run not more than 1200 words in length, for which we pay \$5 each on publication. We also need humorous sketches not to exceed 500 words, jokes, epigrams, humorous verse, and drawings. We consider good novels suitable for serialization and will handle the syndicate rights of suitable material of this nature, as well as market short-stories and novelettes. We have so many demands from magazine editors and publishers for good material, that we can dispose of a variety of writings not suitable for syndication."

*Popular Science Monthly*, 250 Fourth Avenue, New York, announces that it has changed its policy of using only articles and is now in the market for short-stories up to 6500 words and serials up to 60,000 words. Realistic stories conveying the romance of industrial progress—the railroads, steel mills, big factories, the navy and great research laboratories, are suggested settings for colorful stories wherein achievement and adventure may be the theme. The story should be presented from a man's viewpoint and love interest, if any, must be of secondary importance. First-class rates will be paid for acceptable material, which should be sent to the Fiction Editor.

*Top-Notch Magazine*, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York, Arthur E. Scott, editor, writes: "We are at present well stocked with material, but we never turn down a story that has real merit. We shall be open to buy more after July 1. We use any kind of a good story, that is well-constructed, told entertainingly, with novel ideas. We do not want stories in which love is the main subject; dialect stories; the story within a story; and, usually, stories told in the first person. We buy all serial rights."

*Popular Mechanics Magazine*, 200 E. Ontario Street, Chicago, states through its editor, H. H. Windsor, Jr., that rates paid for material are now from 1 to 10 cents a word on acceptance, photographs \$3 each. New and helpful developments in the field of sciences, industry and invention, up to 3000 words, can be used.

*The Baseball Magazine*, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York, F. C. Lane, editor, writes: "*The Baseball Magazine* is in the market for a limited amount of baseball material, general articles on the game and occasional bits of verse. Our rates are from 1/2 to 1 1/2 cents a word, varying with the nature of the material used. We pay on publication. Much of the material that comes to us through the mail is fiction. This is all the more unaccountable as *The Baseball Magazine* has used no fiction for at least ten years."

*The Occult Digest*, 1904 N. Clark Street, Chicago, writes that it cannot pay for contributions.

*Nation's Business*, Connecticut Avenue and H Streets, Washington, D. C., Merle Thorpe, editor, is at present in the market for articles of 2500 words on subjects of general interest to the average business man, short-stories with business themes, short miscellany and editorials of a business nature. "Payment," according to Mr. Thorpe, "is made on acceptance at varying rates, depending on the author, subject and method of treatment."

*Complete Novel Magazine*, 188 W. Fourth Street, New York, states that it is at present in the market for Western novels and serials from 65,000 to 80,000 words. Good rates are understood to be paid on acceptance.

*Sweetheart Stories*, Dell Publishing Co., 461 Eighth Avenue, New York, through its new editor, Wanda von Kettler, describes its needs as follows: "Clean, wholesome love, melodramatic, action and adventure short-stories of 3000 to 6000 words, novelettes of 20,000 words, serials of 35,000 to 50,000 words, and verse of 4 to 16 lines. Payment is on acceptance at from 1 to 2 cents per word according to value of material."

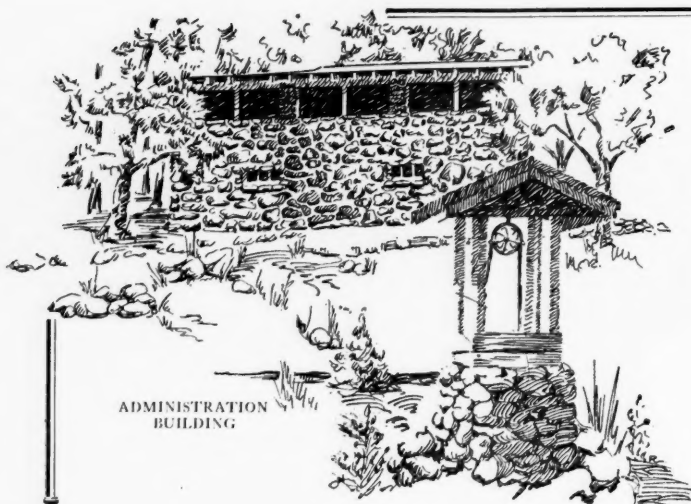
*Everybody's Magazine*, 223 Spring Street, New York, reports that it is in the market for all types of short-stories of from 4000 to 7000 words, all types of novelettes, 12,000 to 20,000 words, and jokes of 25 to 100 words. It is not in the market at present for serials, editorials, verse or short miscellany.

*Brief Stories*, 584 Drexel Building, Philadelphia, William F. Kofoed and Norma Bright Carson, editors, write: "We are in the market for Western, sport, adventure, mystery short-stories of 3500 to 6000 words and a very few novelettes of 10,000 to 18,000 words. Our policy is now for good Western adventure tales, for which we pay at about 1/2 cent a word on publication."

*Ford Dealer and Service Field*, Montgomery Building, Milwaukee, Wis., is in the market for "anything of interest to the Ford trade—stories of successful Ford salesmen, how they accomplished their selling, Ford dealers who have built up their business by unusual methods, etc.," according to the editor, H. J. Larkin. "Payment for material is made six weeks from date of acceptance at a rate depending upon the value of the article to us."

*Town Topics*, 2 W. Forty-fifth Street, New York, J. A. Mayer, editor, announces: "We are in the market for articles and short-stories of 300 to 1500 words of types dealing with society, fashions, sports, resorts and arts; verse of not over 32 lines, short miscellany, skits and anecdotes. Short-stories should be of smart society. Payment is on publication at varying rates."

*Keith's Magazine*, 100 N. Seventh Street, Minneapolis, Minn., changed its title to *Keith's Beautiful Homes* with the April issue and assumed a larger page size.

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Vacation  
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*Radio Broadcast*, Doubleday, Page & Co., Garden City, N. Y., is now edited by Willis K. Wing, and has changed its policy of paying from 1 to 2 cents on acceptance to the same rates on publication. This magazine uses sound articles on construction of radio apparatus, usually prepared by authorities on order, of not over 3000 words. Good photographs are purchased at \$3 each.

*The Rudder*, 9 Murray Street, New York, Gerald T. White, editor, writes: "We are in the market for technical—how to build, handle and repair boats and marine engines—articles of 1000 to 3500 words, and news paragraphs from yachting centers of 100 words, for which we generally pay 1 cent a word on publication. Only practical sail and power boating material is used. Good yachting photographs are acceptable."

*Science and Invention*, 53 Park Place, New York, now pays from 1 to 2 cents a word for material on publication, according to the field editor, J. H. Kraus.

*System, the Magazine of Business*, Cass, Huron and Erie Streets, Chicago, reports that it pays an average of 3 cents a word for material.

*Journeys Beautiful*, 150 Lafayette Street, New York, Wirt W. Barnitz, editor, writes: "I notice that a contributor has written you that after *Journeys Beautiful* held a manuscript for a year and a half, the manuscript was returned without explanation. Your contributor, however, did not state that we said in our letter that it would very likely be another year before it could be published, and that if he so wished he might dispose of it elsewhere; otherwise, we would be glad to keep it and not wait to pay him on publication, but pay him immediately upon his signifying that he desired to have us print it when it would fit consistently into our schedule."

*Cartoons and Movies Magazine*, 13 Park Row, New York, has changed its name, effective with the May issue, to *Cartoons and Collegian Fun*. It has absorbed some of the features of *Collegiate Wit*, which has suspended publication, but is more or less of a trade journal for cartoon and humorous artists, amateur and professional. It is published by Cartoons & Movies, Inc. The editor, Freeman H. Hubbard, announces that he has an abundance of material on hand at the present time.

*Calgary Eye Opener*, Minneapolis, Minn., Harvey Fawcett, publisher, states: "We do not use material unless given first choice." It is so well stocked that few acceptances are being recorded.

*Nazarene Publishing House*, Kansas City, Mo., writes: "Our new address is 2923 Troost Avenue, which kindly use in sending manuscripts to *Youth's Comrade*, *Junior Joys*, *Junior Sunshine*, and *Little People*."

*The Turkey World*, 2721 S. Michigan Boulevard, Chicago, is a new monthly magazine devoted to the breeding, raising, marketing of turkeys.

*Western Auto Top and Body* will be the new title of *Western Paint and Trim Shop*, beginning with the May, 1926, issue. An automobile body building department will be added. The editor, Paul Horst, writes: "Both technical and merchandising articles on the automobile painting, trimming and body building industries are desired. These articles may run from 600 to 3000 words, and whenever possible should be well illustrated with photographs, drawings, diagrams, etc. Articles which have the Western slant—those dealing specifically with the problems and needs of the Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountain States—stand a better chance of acceptance than those of more general character. Payment varies from ½ to 1 cent a word, according to the value of the article, and is made on the 15th of the month following publication. Manuscripts should be addressed to Paul Horst, editor, Downey, Calif."

*Ourselves*, 2218 Tribune Tower, Chicago, Arthur William Scott, editor, reports that following the publication of a notice in the January *AUTHOR & JOURNALIST* requesting material, he has been so deluged with manuscripts that the magazine will be overstocked for the balance of the year.

*Industrial Arts Magazine*, 129 Michigan Street, Milwaukee, Wm. C. Bruce, editor, reports: "We are in the market for articles on any phase of teaching shop work in schools, particularly organization, teaching methods, projects and problems, materials in wood work, sheet metal, printing, machine shop, concrete basketry, electricity, auto mechanics, plumbing, farm shop, mechanical and free hand drawing, etc. A great deal of free-lance material cannot be used because it lacks the school slant and fails to embody correct pedagogical principles."

*Kansas City Star Magazine*, 1729 Grand Avenue, Kansas City, reports that it is overstocked at present with short-stories and novelettes. Serials are purchased only from established authors whose names are known to its readers. It is still in the market for personality-success articles of Middle West characters of 2500 words. "All material must be of high literary quality. No dialect or amateurish efforts or cheap, careless work of any kind is used," states the editor, E. B. Garnett. "Verse and short miscellany are not used." Payment is made at 1 cent up a month following acceptance." This statement seems to conflict with the rejection slip of the concern, which states that payment is on publication.

*The Young Churchman*, 1801 Fond du Lac Avenue, Milwaukee, "is in the market for illustrated articles of 1000 to 1500 words about interesting places, historic or otherwise, that will appeal to live youngsters," according to the editor, Pearl H. Campbell. "Stories with love interest, verse or stories for very young children, we do not want. We get a great deal of such material and it all goes back."

# THE S. T. C. NEWS

A Page of Comment and Gossip About the Simplified Training Course and Fiction Writing Topics in General

VOL. III, No. 5

MAY, 1926

EDITED BY DAVID RAFFAELLA

## HAVEN FOR WRITERS

### The Author & Journalist's Summer Writers' Colony Offers Many Ideal Features

Writers who attend The Author & Journalist's Writers' Colony are going to have the time of their lives. Arrangements now completed are ideal and unique. The student-writer will work directly with professional writers, submitting work to them, listening to lectures by them and discussing problems of authorship with them.

The Colony will have few characteristics of a school. It is a place where writers, both experienced and inexperienced, will gather for inspiration and training, to work and to play together. Prominent writers will lecture and Colony writers will have an opportunity to discuss writing with them.

Of course, The Author & Journalist staff will be on hand for frequent chats. Edwin Hunt Hoover, who is in charge of the literary criticism department of The Author & Journalist, and who has sold short-stories, chiefly Western, numbering in the hundreds, will have many interesting and important things to say. Such a great vogue exists for Western stories that student-writers, come to the Colorado cowboy land, will doubtless want to learn all they can about the requirements of this type of story. Willard E. Hawkins, editor of The Author & Journalist, will talk on technique and furnish "red-hot" market tips. Harry Adler, another Western writer and staff member, will discuss the important possibilities in writing mining stories. Arthur Hawthorne Carhart and Albert William Stone are among the short-story writers of note who will talk to the Colony—and negotiations are under way with other writers of national and international reputation who will lecture at the Writers' Colony. Two lectures by successful authors will be given each week, in addition to the regular discussions and training periods.

Colony writers will have an opportunity to visit many of the nearby famous mining towns, such as Gold Hill, Ward, Idaho Springs, Central City and Black Hawk.

Over the sixteen acres of the Colony grounds students will find delightful spots under the towering pine trees, to read and dream and plan stories. The Colony library contains many books for writers and other books well worth reading. Even the recreational events will contain abundant material for stories: There will be, for example, a trip to the weird Red Rocks Park; frequent visits to the nearby Indian pu-

## A Few Words of Gossip With the Editor

The position of The Author & Journalist is unique among magazines. As a non-commercial publication, issued in the interests of the serious writer, it has refused to print advertisements that were misleading and has maintained a strict editorial policy of printing only material that is intelligently inspirational and authoritative. Through its Simplified Training Course, The Author & Journalist has also won decided claims to distinction.

In promoting this course, it has consistently steered clear of the usual hokum appeals found in correspondence school advertisements. The endeavor has been to supplant emotional appeals with straightforward statements stressing the importance of thorough training, the competent personal guidance given by the S. T. C., the knowledge of literary fundamentals which each student acquires, and the general authoritativeness of the training.

The Simplified Training Course has its full share of successful students, students who at the start wrote obscure, formless stories, hopeless from a market standpoint and who have been trained so that now they are making substantial sums from their writing. S. T. C. students have sold stories to a large proportion of the leading magazines. S. T. C. students may be found in every state in the United States, and all over the world.

These are, of course, interesting facts. The appeal they make in advertisements is to the heart, not to the mind. We want writers to know with confidence that when they enroll for the S. T. C. training they will not have to pay the price of the course's reputation, but that each one will secure full, honest and authoritative training, designed to meet his individual requirements. If the student possesses ability, the S. T. C. training will quickly and definitely train him to attain success in fiction writing. It is upon this guarantee that the Simplified Training Course has built up an enviable reputation for reliability, service and efficiency.

eblo; hiking trips to canons, mountain peaks and over rugged Western scenery that has served as a setting for many stories.

In accordance with The Author & Journalist's usual plan to bring its advantages within the limits of the average purse, the cost will be very moderate. Writers may come for one week or two weeks, if they are unable to attend the entire period of six weeks. Full information will gladly be given upon request.

## SATISFIED STUDENTS

### Clippings From S. T. C. Files of Unsolicited Letters Sent by Students

"I am a great booster for the A. & J. Simplified Training Course. Who wouldn't be?"—N. L. Hempstead, L. I.

"I enclose my work under the first division of lessons. In doing so, may I endeavor to express my appreciation of the excellent features of your course? You set up into problem and solution; into basic elements, complications and struggle; the clean-cut distinctions between outline, tale and short-story, are most helpful. The lessons are practical, concise and plainly understandable. I congratulate myself on embarking on your course."—J. W. R. San Francisco.

Your letter of the 19th instant, containing psychological analysis of my ability and possibility as a literary light, was received yesterday. I wish to thank you, because I feel that it will be very helpful to me and I shall wish to refer to it often to remind me where my weak points are. This is evidently not a 'form' letter, but an analysis especially adapted to my individual characteristics, and as such, it is of considerable benefit.

"My latest story appears in this month's (April) issue of Real Detective Tales."—G. G. G., Los Angeles, Calif.

"Allow me to take a minute of your valuable time to let you know that my story, 'Old Don,' has just sold to the Chicago Daily News. You will probably remember it as the 1500-word story you criticized for me during my period of training under you.

"This is probably the only way I can express my gratitude to you for the training I received, and I am glad to add my 'three cheers' for you and the S. T. C. to those of many other satisfied students.

"May your splendid work continue."—J. B. Minneapolis, Minn.

"The S. T. C. lessons arrived today and I am pleased with them. I have taken extension work with some of the largest universities in the country and find the correspondence instruction of more value than a residence course. This may seem like an admission, coming from a teacher, but I consider it true. The way you tackle what is to be done suits me.

"I am taking this course from you because I am satisfied that you know how to teach it and because I want to learn."—R. G. M., Montrose, Colo.

"I surely appreciate the interest you have taken in me as an S. T. C. student."—M. H., Dallas, Texas.

*Business Feature Syndicate*, which gives its address only as Post Office Box Number 1910, Chicago, writes that it is in the market for material dealing with successful business methods as applied by individuals or all types of business institutions. "Payment varies with the worth of the matter submitted." No name is attached to the announcement other than the *Business Feature Syndicate*, and THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST is not informed as to the reliability of the concern.

*The Mottoette Company*, 29 E. Ohio Street, Chicago, E. Rolfe, manager, states: "This company now has sufficient material for the entire year of 1926. Since the publication of a notice in your magazine several months ago that we would be glad to consider verse for mottoes, we have been deluged with correspondence on this material and it has been difficult to handle it promptly. However, we would now advise that all manuscripts found unavailable have been returned to writers."

*True Indian Stories*, Oklahoma City, Okla., a new magazine announced for publication and reported to be in need of material, has now abandoned its plans, according to Clint McDade, the editor.

*Police Stories*, 128 W. Thirty-first Street, New York, is reported to be in financial difficulties and involved in a bankruptcy suit, with creditors asking for a receiver.

*King Features Syndicate*, 241 W. Fifty-eighth Street, New York, is not using stories of more than 1200 words at the present time.

*The Catholic World*, 120 W. Sixtieth Street, New York, "is a national Catholic monthly magazine carrying articles on all topics, political, scientific, historical, and literary, also fiction, written from the Catholic point of view," according to the editor, James M. Gillis. THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST is not informed as to rates paid.

*The San Francisco Review*, published at San Francisco, but edited at Mill Valley, Calif., by David Warren Ryder and Marie De L. Welch, uses short-stories and verse. Rates and methods of payment are not at hand.

*True Story Magazine*, 1926 Broadway, New York, announces that it pays 2 cents a word and not less than \$2 each for acceptable jokes from real life.

*10 Story Book*, of which the editorial offices are now removed to 1321 Addison Street, 2-A, Chicago, Harry Stephen Keeler, editor, writes: "Writers will do well to note that *10 Story* is so badly overstocked on non-sex stories that none can be accepted for a year or more to come. Of sex stories and other stories of daring or iconoclastic nature, only the very cream of submittances can be accepted, as we are overstocked in that department also."

*Wild Game Stories* is a new quarterly magazine to appear with the April issue from 22 E. Twelfth Street, Cincinnati.

*Variety*, a weekly theatrical magazine, has moved from 1536 Broadway to 154 W. Forty-sixth Street, New York.

*The Continent*, 509 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, was merged with *The Presbyterian Advance*, Nashville, Tenn., with the April 22nd issue. Rev. James E. Clarke, editor of *The Advance*, has announced that for the present he will be unable to pay for contributions.

*Laughs and Chuckles*, Wilmington, Del., is reported by a contributor to have failed to make payment for several jokes accepted last August, and to ignore letters of inquiry.

*The American Legion Weekly*, Philip Von Blon, managing editor, Indianapolis, Ind., informs a contributor that it is "able to accept practically no outside contributions at this time because of lack of space and large volume of material on hand and that this condition is very apt to continue for several months at least."

*The Oregon Voter*, edited by C. C. Chapman and F. H. Young, at Worcester Building, Portland, Ore., and "devoted to the advancement of every material interest which tends to promote the general welfare of the state," announces that it is in the market for material which contains "significant information or penetrating analysis." Its field includes government problems, projects, public utilities, agricultural development, water power, timber, and kindred subjects.

*Water Works Engineering* is the new title of *Fire and Water Engineering*, 225 W. Thirty-fourth Street, New York.

*Southern Engineer*, Atlanta, Ga., changed its name with the January 1st issue to *Southern Power Journal*.

*Drug & Chemical Markets*, New York, will be divided into two separate publications commencing in May. *Chemical Markets* will be published weekly beginning May 12, in the interests of the chemical and chemical process industries. *Drug Markets* will appear May 4, and appear fortnightly thereafter. Its editorial contents will be addressed to manufacturers of pharmaceutical, proprietary, toilet and flavoring preparations.

*Cackle & Crow* is a new poultry journal to be published at Guilford, Conn.

*Household Magazine*, Topeka, Kan., has suspended its humor department "for the time being," states Mrs. Ida Migliario, editor, and is "simply flooded with jokes."

*The Congregationalist*, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, Wm. E. Gilroy, editor, is greatly overstocked with material and is not in the market for manuscripts of any kind at present.

## Little Letters ON SCREEN WRITING

### NO. 3

By Hamilton Thompson, of  
The Fox Film Corporation

"There isn't the remotest chance for a person who hasn't ability to write an acceptable original story for motion picture purposes, or for any other purposes, for that matter. On the other hand, a published story or a produced play must have convinced someone of experience that it contains a valuable idea, and naturally motion picture companies will find more of such ideas in these fields."

✱

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VERSE CRITICISM (By Thomas Hornsby Ferril):	
20 lines or less.....	\$1.00
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LITERARY REVISION. Careful correction and polishing of a manuscript with special reference to bettering the style. Brief criticism and market suggestions included. Rate:	
With typing, per thousand words.....	\$2.00
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Edited by J. BERG ESENWEIN

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MARY ROBERTS RINEHART says: "The Writer's Monthly looks awfully good to me. For years I have been telling beginning authors that there is nothing in the world so good for them as such a magazine. It puts them in touch with publications they would otherwise not think of. So many writers live away from New York, and since by the very nature of the work it must be done in solitude, it seems to me that such a magazine coming in once a month is like hand-shakes from a fellow craftsman."

Single copies 25 cents \$3.00 a year  
Write for special offers  
**THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, Dept. 63**  
Springfield, Mass.



*Radio Age*, 500 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, F. A. Hill, associate editor, states: "You might say that our desires are along technical and semi-technical lines in the construction and operation of radio receivers, telegraph transmitters, and other radio apparatus for transmission and reception. We have a number of writers along technical lines who are already acquainted with our subject matter, and we usually depend upon them for our material. Inasmuch as *Radio Age* has a pronounced leaning toward the technical end of radio, it is almost impossible to forecast our requirements."

*The Starchroom Laundry Journal*, 415 Commercial Square, Cincinnati, Ohio, Albert Stritmatter, editor, sends this: "We are particularly interested in articles which have to do with the collection and delivery of laundry work and which contain costs of operating laundry delivery equipment. Articles of successful selling or advertising experiences, or any special articles which would be of interest to the owner of a commercial power laundry, are what we need and can always use. A limited amount of miscellaneous news with regard to power laundries also can be used. We intend to mail checks for material on the date of publication or within a day or so, when we can get the list made up."

*Fur-Fish-Game*, 174 E. Long Street, Columbus, Ohio, A. R. Harding, editor and publisher, writes: "This publication uses no fiction. At the present time we especially want fur-raising articles and can use some articles on fishing. These should be illustrated. What we want is instructive articles—those telling how to raise fur animals or those giving methods for catching bass, trout and other fish. We desire actual happenings, mentioning place, date, etc. No fiction or manufactured material is wanted. We pay on publication usually at ¼ cent a word and up."

*Hunter-Trader-Trapper*, 386 S. Fourth Street, Columbus, Ohio, O. Kuechler, editor, writes that he pays on acceptance for material at various rates, according to the value of the article. This magazine was recently reported as not paying for material. Mr. Kuechler further writes: "We are overstocked with hunting, trapping and fishing stories. We can use, however, fur-farming articles of 1500 words and articles of the same length on raising various breeds of hunting dogs; also woodcraft kinks."

*Youth's World*, 1701 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, reports that it pays up to ½ cent a word on acceptance for material. It needs short-stories up to 2500 words, serials of 2 to 8 chapters, and miscellany for boys from 13 to 16 years.

Correspondence addressed to the following magazines has been returned marked "Not found": *National Laundry Journal*, 120 Ann Street, Chicago; *Motor*, 119 W. Fourth Street, New York; *B'nai Brith*, 7 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago.

*The Household Magazine*, Topeka, Kans., "is in the market for feature articles of particular interest to small town and rural women, including travel or success articles, of about 1500 words, accompanied by at least one and preferably three good, clear photographs," according to the editor, Mrs. Ida Migliario. Low rates are paid on acceptance.

*Lutheran Young Folks*, 1228-34 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, Wm. L. Hunton, reviewing editor, describes his needs as follows: "Descriptive and inspirational articles of 2000 to 3000 words; short-stories of 2000 to 3500 words; serials, 4 to 12 chapters of 2000 to 3000 words per chapter. Athletic, out-of-door, domestic, rural, juvenile, and seasonal stories are the types needed. We do not use love stories. Rates are fair, varying according to type and needs. Payment is made on acceptance." *Sunbeams* and *Sunshine*, both of the same address, also pay fair rates.

*The Young Crusader*, 1730 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, Ill., "uses anti-cigarette, peppy stories with a moral, anti-cigarette articles (no adult teaching, as ours is a juvenile publication), tales teaching kindness to animals and character-building material in general," writes the editor, Miss Windsor Grow. "We do not pay for jokes and only occasionally for poems. We pay on publication, with few exceptions, at \$2 per thousand words."

*Child Welfare Magazine*, Market Square, Germantown, Pa., uses long and short material treating of education in its various forms, child training, etc., paying ½ cent a word on acceptance.

*The Sodality Magazine*, 626 N. Vandeventer Avenue, St. Louis, Mo., formerly *The Queen's Work*, is in the market for material of Catholic interest—short-stories with Catholic atmosphere, articles on your Sodality, its elections, parish work, retreats, social life; for serials and photographs from all over the world. Payment is made on publication but rates are not at hand.

*Social Progress*, 205 W. Monroe Street, Chicago, Molly W. Pearson, managing editor, writes: "We are usually paying on publication now. We have been buying far in advance of our needs and are greatly oversupplied with material of all kinds."

*The Mailbag*, Caxton Building, Cleveland, O., uses material on direct mail advertising for which it pays about 1 cent a word on publication.

*The Double Dealer* has moved from 204 Baronne Street to 401-403 Bienville Street, New Orleans. The editors, Julius Weis Friend and John McClure, announce that the magazine will be issued bi-monthly hereafter instead of monthly. *The Double Dealer* uses articles up to 3000 words on literary subjects, short-stories, verse, miscellany, but does not pay for material.

*Hoard's Dairyman*, Fort Atkinson, Wis., will be issued twice monthly hereafter.

(Continued on page 30)

# Queries and Comments

## SUBMITTING SIMILAR ARTICLES

*Editor, The Author & Journalist:*

Here is a question regarding literary etiquette: How many varying biographical sketches may a writer offer to the magazine editors, about the same man, provided that this man has a great variety of achievements to his credit and provided that the stories are written from entirely different angles? For example, one that would appeal to the general public, one to readers of boys' magazines, one from a woman's standpoint for a women's magazine, one for a technical magazine, etc., but all necessarily mentioning some of the same outstanding features in this man's life, (accompanying illustrations, of course, to be all different).

L. L.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Without attempting to settle this question definitely, we would say that an editor's desire to use a sketch would be considerably dampened by the realization that the same writer intended to submit sketches on the same subject to other publications. At any rate, the writer should make certain that the fields of the publications do not overlap to a material extent.



## IS HARDER WORK THE ANSWER?

*Editor Author & Journalist:*

Frank True of K. C. is frank if not quite true. Raymond S. Spears works from ten to fourteen hours a day. I come so near equalling his record that there is hardly the thick of a thumb between us. Bob Pinkerton is so industrious that he broke down from overwork. So did Kathrene Pinkerton, his wife.

B. M. Bower suffered a breakdown from the same cause while my near neighbor. Henry Herbert Knibbs has had the habit of regular, daily labor ever since he began trying to break in, and success failed to show up any lazy streak in his cosmos. William R. Lighton told me in my study one evening that he worked as regularly as any mechanic.

Where lies the lazy streak in the writers who turn out all the way from 150,000 to 250,000 saleable words in a year?

I have been selling manuscripts regularly since April, 1915, and my working hours have been just as religiously followed as they were when I was a journeyman carpenter, with a wife and children to support.

I know a lot of writers who are built that way. So much for Frank Not Quite True.

E. E. HARRIMAN, *Los Angeles.*

## ANOTHER DIAGNOSIS

*Editor of The Author & Journalist:*

Will you permit me to sympathize with brother Frank C. True whose troubles were set forth in the March number? For years I have been in the same fix. I have even gone so far as to address large gatherings of women on such subjects as "Literature, Art and Music of the World." I have always wanted to write a masterpiece. It is to contain action, adventure, pathos, humor, love in the moonlight, passages in beautiful English and an underlying philosophy of life that will revolutionize modern thought. I talked about it so much that the wife (who is a practical soul) suggested that I go ahead and write it. I did. Word by word, line by line, page by page, it progressed. Finally it was completed, a perfect work. Enclosed in a beautiful, blue cover, my baby, my darling, my masterpiece, my supreme, outstanding epic of American Life was wafted on its way to the editor of a big magazine. I wanted it to be illustrated in colors and to appear serially before being bestowed upon the world in volume form.

I already could read the press comments. Fame and fortune were mine. I plunged into a novelette and then dashed off two or three short-stories. I was planning a mansion on Park Hill and trying to decide between a Rolls-Royce and a Cadillac, when my masterpiece came back.

What was the matter with that editor? I sent it to another and also sent the novelette and the short-stories. Out they went, back they came. The record time some of them made to New York and back will probably never be beaten.

What was the matter with the editors? I kept the stories going. They all came back. What was the reason my gems of literature wouldn't sell? Alas, the trouble must lie with me. I was reduced from a gigantic, gas-inflated Los Angeles (I mean the airship) to a toy balloon.

From here on this may sound like a testimonial, but it isn't. I wrote for the dope on THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST's course in story writing. After reading it several times I decided that the advanced course in literature and creative writing was the thing for me. I applied for it and enclosed a story to prove my ability.

I blush with shame when I think of the kick Mr. Raffelock got out of that letter and story. He proceeded to puncture my toy balloon and left me flat in the dirt. He wrote a two-page letter—a very nice one—that violated all the rules of brevity. What he meant was this: "Your stuff is a joke. The literary story? Ha, ha! Sonny, be-

fore going to college you should learn the multiplication table and the alphabet."

He sent me the first lessons—the primer. Happy? Man, I could have jumped over the moon. At last I had located the trouble: I didn't know anything about fiction writing. I buckled into the first group of lessons and wrote a note to Father Raffelock telling him I believed I was getting the idea. That was a darn lie, but I didn't want to discourage him.

After some experience in writing, at the age of thirty-five, I am starting out to learn to become an author. If long hours of labor under the care of Father Raffelock—coupled with repentance, fasting and prayer—will do the trick, I am going to achieve what is now my chief ambition in life—to land a story in a print-paper magazine.

Mr. True, our trouble isn't laziness or indifference or anything other than blissful ignorance and conceit. Writing newspaper features and movie articles no more qualifies us for writing fiction than tying up a cut finger will qualify us as surgeons. We will never write fiction until we get the eternal stuffing kicked out of us. That we will get if we keep sending our alleged stories to the magazines. You and I don't write stories because we don't know how. If we did, the combined efforts of army, navy and marine corps couldn't prevent us from turning out fiction by the ream.

The only hope is that we may acquire sufficient knowledge to know that we know nothing.

A. M. EMLEY, *Denver, Colo.*



#### MARKETING ADVICE

Dear Editor:

Occasionally your editor's-gossip department comments on contributors' marketing problems, as in your recent advice not to take one of your contributor's suggestions about being militantly businesslike in collections too literally. Whether or not pertinent to one of that issue's articles, may we not have more such informal counsel from time to time? Your position as buffer between contributor and editor is unique; your judgment as experienced referee should be valuable and interesting.

RAY W. FROHMAN, *Portland, Ore.*



#### A WRITER'S CREED

You must fight to hold the ground you have won and then struggle on toward the heights. Man can never stand still; he is always in process of winning or losing.

So long as you keep on trying, you are on the road toward complete victory, even though you cannot see that you are making progress.

*Friederick G. Bundlong.*

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## Literary Market Tips

*(Continued from Page 27)*

*Store Operation*, 205 Caxton Building, Cleveland, Ohio, Harry E. Martin, editor, reports: "We are in the market for method articles covering all phases of store management, maintenance, expense control, merchandise handling, for which we pay 1 cent a word on publication. Merchandising material and generalizations are not wanted."

*Western Paint and Trim Shop* is in need of articles dealing with automobile trimming, upholstery, painting, striping, and body building. Methods and processes are desired, and articles should also, if possible, be well illustrated with drawings, diagrams, and photographs. Special attention should be given to the needs and requirements of the Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountain states, and articles must be specific, dealing with concrete facts. Contributing writers must be intimately familiar with the subject, or else must obtain their material directly from men who are. Payment is made the 15th of the month following publication, at rates ranging from ½ cent to 1 cent per word. All manuscripts must be addressed to Paul Horst, editor, 1256 W. Sixty-second Street, Los Angeles.

*The Northwestern Miller*, Minneapolis, Minn., announces that it is in need of "illustrated articles of 2000 to 4000 words on subjects of general and technical interest to millers, bakers, flour merchants and grain dealers; short illustrated articles of 200 to 1000 words, dealing with picturesque or historical flour mills or bakers; personality articles, with portraits and illustrations, dealing with veteran millers of the old school or successful figures in modern milling; short humorous anecdotes concerning mills and millers; an occasional short-story of not over 3000 words, with a strictly milling flavor; verse with a savor of the flour mill, the wheat field or the loaf of bread. Articles must be authoritative and accurate. Verse must have literary merit, and all material, to be acceptable, must be written with a distinction uncommon to most trade journals." *The Northwestern Miller* is understood to pay for material on acceptance, though rates are not at hand.

*Standard Bible School Worker*, Edwin R. Errett, editor, Box 5, Station N, Cincinnati, Ohio, a quarterly, issued by the Standard Publishing Company, desires articles up to 5000 words on methods in church school work, either as to general administration or any department. Fifty cents a hundred words and up is paid for material.

*Arts, Fads, Modes and Art Studio Life* are new monthlies published by Artists and Models, Inc., 925 Market Street, Wilmington, Del. Magazines published at this address are understood to pay low rates on publication for material and the pictorial ones are limited markets.



*The Millinery Trade Review*, 1225 Broadway, New York, and *The American Hatter*, of the same address, pay 1/2 to 1 cent a word for material, according to the editor, E. F. Hubbard.

*The Progressive Farmer*, Birmingham, Ala., uses short-stories of successful farming in the South for which it pays at low rates on publication.

*The Retail Ledger*, 1346 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, a semi-monthly, is edited by William Nelson Taft, who writes: "Material must be in straight reportorial style—not padded. Tell the story and then let it stop. We deal only with retail business and do not touch restaurants, laundries, garages or banks. Photographic material of retail interest is particularly desired for our rotogravure section. We are in the market for articles of 1000 to 2000 words for which we pay 1 cent a word and \$3 for each photograph."

*The Young Churchman*, 1801 Fond du Lac Avenue, Milwaukee, Wis., "is not buying much at present save an occasional illustrated article of about 1000 to 1800 words of a type to appeal to live boys and girls," writes the editor, Pearl H. Campbell. "We have all the serials we can handle for the next six months. Essays are generally written by one of our regular staff. Neither are we in the market for short-stories at present. It is wholly a waste of stamps to send us tales on worn themes, such as misunderstood prodigies, etc. We do not pay for poetry. Ours are moderate rates, paid on acceptance, and we try to be fair with contributors."

*Candy and Ice Cream Retailer*, 30 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, and *Candy Factory-Jobber*, of the same address, are in the market for human-interest material relating how some retailer has made a success of his business and the methods used. News correspondence, candy factory production, control, purchasing and general operating methods, merchandising and sales systems, policies, are subjects for desired material. Payment is made, using 1 cent as a basis, on publication. Photographs are also desired.

*Sports Afield*, 508 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Claude King, editor, paid only \$2 for a 1500-word article, seven months after it had been accepted.

*The Living Age*, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, Victor S. Clark, editor, during its eighty-one years of publication, has printed exclusively articles and translations of articles that have previously appeared in foreign journals.

*Confectioner's Journal*, 411 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, "is not in the market for manuscripts at the present time," according to the managing editor, W. W. Gale.

*Farm and Fireside*, 250 Park Avenue, New York, recently advised a contributor that it has so much fiction and poetry on hand just now that it will be unable to buy anything for the next few months.

## Reliable Sales Service for Authors

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### Prize Contests

*The Commonweal*, Grand Central Terminal, New York, announces the John S. Leahy prize of \$1,000 to the writer of the best essay on Dante submitted on or before September 1, 1926. The essay should be of an interpretative rather than a philological or research nature and its literary merit will be an important consideration. The competition is open to all contestants, but entries must be written in English, typewritten, and contain not more than 5000 words. Send entries to Dante Prize Committee at the above address.

*Chatterbox*, *The New Leader*, 7 E. Fifteenth Street, New York, offers \$100 for the best poem of not more than 100 lines submitted to it not later than May 15, 1926. No particular theme or form is specified and there is no limit as to number of entries from a contestant. The date of award is announced as June 5, 1926. Contributions should be marked "For May Poetry Contest." Floyd Dell, Joseph T. Shipley and E. Ralph Cheney will be the judges.

*Contemporary Verse*, Station H, Box 38, New York, announces the Oscar Gleason Mason prize of \$150 for a poem not exceeding 150 lines of universal interest, using philosophic or scientific material, and the Golden Plough award of \$100 for the most distinguished contribution submitted to it during the year 1926, and the Ballad Purse of \$50 for a ballad or narrative of not more than 100 lines, dealing with a native American subject. The three contests close October 30, 1926. To cover cost of clerical handling, it is stated, an entrance fee of fifty cents will be charged all competitors for the Oscar Gleason Mason prize and the Ballad Purse who are not subscribers to *Contemporary Verse*. (THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST believes that this is distinctly contrary to postal regulations.) Dialect poems will be returned on sight. *Contemporary Verse* reserves the right to publish at regular rates any manuscripts submitted.

*Wallace's Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, offers \$10 for the "best slogan for the farmers' shipping associations." It states: "The farmers' elevator slogan is well known by this time. It is, 'There is no substitute for the farmers' elevator.' Shipping associations need a slogan with as much or more pith and vigor. Contest ends May 10. Send slogan, preferably written on a postcard, to The Slogan Editor."

*Frederick A. Stokes & Co.*, 443 Fourth Avenue, New York, announces a prize of \$7500 above royalties for the best biographical novel of a figure prominent in American history as the central character, submitted before March 1, 1927. Authors of all nationalities are eligible to compete. *Curtis Brown, Ltd.*, 116 W. Thirty-ninth Street, New York, is conducting the contest and will furnish statement of conditions.

*Ourselves*, 2218 Tribune Tower, Chicago, announces the date of its poetry contest has been extended to June 20, 1926. Prizes have been increased also, as follows: 1st prize, \$50; 2nd, \$25; 3rd, \$10. Amateurs only are permitted to enter this contest, the designation being held to include anyone who has had not more than five poems printed. Poems should not contain over 32 lines. Contestants should study the character of the magazine before submitting entries.

*Laughter*, 584 Drexel Building, Philadelphia, is continuing its \$50 prize contest for the best examples of caricature published in its pages up to and including the September, 1926, issue. Its announcements indicate that it is designed to attract work of caricaturists not previously in print.

*True Story Magazine*, 1926 Broadway, New York, runs a department, "Domestic Relations Court," in which monthly prizes of \$15, \$10, and \$5 are awarded for the three best letters written in answer to given problems. Answers to the problem given in the May issue must reach the office by noon, May 15th. Prizes will be awarded by June 1st. Winning letters will be published in an early issue. Address Priscilla Wayne.

*Popular Science Monthly*, 250 Fourth Avenue, New York, is conducting monthly \$1000 picture prize contests in which contestants are asked to enumerate mistakes found in published pictures. The magazine also offers \$10 each month, in addition to space rates, for the best idea for motorists; \$2 for every article published of not more than 200 words describing ingenious keeping-the-home-shipshape methods. Pencil sketches or photographs to illustrate the idea should be included with the latter if possible. *Popular Science Monthly* also offers to pay for letters telling of good ways to use cellar space to advantage in the home.

*The Chicago Trust Company* offers annual prizes of \$300 and \$200 for the two best manuscripts on original research in business and finance submitted during the year. The competition is open to students registered in the American Institute of Banking, to bank employees generally, except officers of banks, to students in commerce and law, and in departments of economics of colleges and universities, and to graduate students who have not completed more than one year of graduate work. In addition to these prizes, there is a triennial research prize of \$2500 for an unpublished study, submitted in competition, which is considered to contain the greatest original contribution to knowledge and advancement in the field outlined. This award will be made in the autumn of 1927. Papers are due not later than June 1, 1927, and should be addressed to Professor Leverett S. Lyon, Professor of Economics, Robert Brookings Graduate School of Economics and Government, 1724 I Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

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*The Church Touring Guild*, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York, announces that its founder, Sir Henry Lunn, offers a prize of \$100 and a second of \$50 for the two best articles on "The Inspiration of a Trip to the Holy Land," written by clergymen residing in the United States. Articles must contain not more than 2000 words and should be submitted to the above address before midnight June 1. The essays should be signed with the name and address of the author and marked, "For prize article contest." All clergymen, Protestant, Jewish or Catholic, are eligible to compete.

*The Chattanooga Writers' Club* announces a prize of \$20, open to all entrants, for the best nature poem, and a second prize of \$10 for the best nature poem by a Southern writer living in the South. This is an annual competition which has been conducted by the club since the establishment of the Robert Sparks Walker fund. Poems must be original and unpublished; contestant must submit only one poem, which shall not exceed 72 lines, though form and style are unrestricted; no manuscripts will be returned, and winning poems will become property of club; contest closes Nov. 1, 1926, with prize awards on Jan. 1, 1927; author's name must not appear on manuscript but be enclosed in separate envelope with address; send poems to Miss Jessie E. Turner, president of Chattanooga Writers' Club, 1319 Dodds Avenue, Chattanooga, Tenn.

*Collier's*, 250 Park Avenue, New York, is buying "your funniest old pictures" for its "Let's Get Out the Album" department. Those submitted before May 15, and found acceptable, will be purchased at \$5 each. No full names are published.

*Superior Hat Company*, St. Louis, Mo., offers \$1250 in 84 awards for the best slogans (word limits not given) describing the "Evr-Kool Pandanlid," a summer hat for men. Entry blank and details obtainable from dealers, or, presumably, from the company.

*The Tribune*, Chicago, announces: "The snappy come-back of the better half when cornered has often been a source of wonder to husbands and wives. What was the bright saying, Mr.? Mrs.? Write it out for us. We'll pay you \$1 for it if we use it. Address Bright Sayings of Husbands and Wives, care of *The Tribune*."

*Creek Chub Bait Company*, Garrett, Ind., offers \$25 for the best, \$15 for the second best, \$10 for the third best fish photos of 1926 "catches." Also it offers an artificial bait to each person who "sends in a good photo." "Get plenty of the outdoors in the picture. Contest ends at end of fishing season. The same concern states: "We will pay \$100 to the person sending us the best name and the description of this lure (a new 'wiggling' artificial minnow), and why every fisherman should use it. Try to keep descriptive paragraph within fifty words. The lure can be seen at dealers'. Contest closes July 31.

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The \$1,000 prize offered by Cecil B. deMille for an idea for a motion picture has been awarded to Catherine Comstock of Long Beach, Calif., for suggesting "The Deluge," based on the Biblical story of the flood. Approximately 40,000 persons competed. Jeannie MacPherson will prepare the script, and it is expected that a year will be required for production.

Robert H. Davis, who has been nearly twenty-three years associated with the editorial department of the Frank A. Munsey Company, has been re-elected a director of the company and appointed to the executive board. He will return to Egypt this fall and complete his travels on the Continent which were interrupted when he was called home by the death of Frank A. Munsey.

Edward A. Vandeventer has resigned as managing editor of *Sunset Magazine* to become editor of the Oakland, Cal., *Morning Times*.

Production plans of the photoplay companies for the year 1926-27 include the making of 811 feature films, according to figures given out this month. Almost without exception the companies that have announced their productions make it clear that they will be based upon published books and plays that have been successful on the speaking stage.

The estate of Henry Holt, publisher, who died February 13th, is appraised at \$1,000,000.

It is reported that Frances Marion, scenario writer, was paid \$25,000 for the scenario she pro-

duced for "The Son of the Shiek," the forthcoming vehicle for Rudolph Valentino to be produced by United Artists.

*Tabloid Reviews*

THE ROSALIE EVANS LETTERS FROM MEXICO.  
*Bobbs-Merrill Company, \$5.00.*

A book of international significance. Rosalie Evans, an American woman, for eight years defended her life and property in Mexico amid a reign of terror, until she was murdered in 1924. During this period she wrote detailed letters home to her sister, who has allowed them to be published, believing that the best way to carry on the work Mrs. Evans was doing is to let the truth be known.

If it is the truth—and the reader can scarcely doubt the internal evidence of the letters—the book is likely to revive doubts as to America's wisdom in handling the Mexican situation. England seems to have taken a much more courageous stand, and H. A. C. Cummins, the British ambassador, proved himself a man among men.

But, thought-provoking as the letters are from a standpoint of international policy, it is as a human document that the book reaches heights that have rarely been attained in fact or fiction. The letters paint vivid pictures of guerrilla warfare, of intrigue, of melodramatic incidents tinged with pathos and humor, of a vast array of characters—of their author's soul growth. Mrs. Davis possessed an amazing knack of sketching in persons and scenes with vivid words and phrases. Suspense of the "breathless" type pervades the story. It could not be otherwise with the theme one of conflict in which a lone woman is arrayed against a treacherous government—against literally hordes of natives, carrying arms said to have been shipped from the United States and incited against her by grasping leaders. Against a background of lawlessness and treachery, stand out such inspiring portraits as that of the British ambassador, Cummins, who sacrificed his embassy in a losing fight for her, of two brave and chivalrous men, a Spaniard and an American, who at different times fought by her side with heroic devotion; and two Indian girls, who constantly risked their lives in her service. Picture a slight woman, cultured, spirited, attractive and socially popular, as successfully fighting against such odds, driving armed bands from her land by force of personality and arms, defying the unscrupulous government—if a novelist should write of such things his story would be derided as a fairy tale. Yet the incredible becomes a reality under the magic of Mrs. Evans's narration.

Read the book if for no other reason than its value as a study in character development. A more dramatic passage in fact or fiction would be difficult to find than that which, in matter-of-fact words, tells of the author's awakening to the knowledge that she does not need the protection of man.

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